

London Christian Instructor,
or
CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

No. 79.]

JULY, 1824.

[Vol. VII.]

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN BELFRAGE,
PASTOR OF THE ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION OF FALKIRK.

THE memory of the just is blessed, and, even when his life presents little of what is usually considered interesting in circumstance, it is a refreshing exercise to dwell for a moment on his blameless character, his steady course, and his tranquil or triumphant death. The brief reminiscences of such men, which appear from time to time, are so many attestations to the truth and excellence of the principles which guided them in their progress, sustained them in many a trying hour, and gave them calmness and hope in the near prospect of death and immortality. There is a wide difference between Christian graces and Heathen virtues; the latter may adorn, the former only can exalt; the active citizen, the benevolent member of society, the tried friend, the communicator of happiness to the domestic circle, all these will be missed by survivors, they will leave a chasm in the respective spheres which they adequately filled up; but the consistent follower of Christ, while he fulfils a part of his high vocation by discharging these duties in a yet more perfect manner, sanctifies them all by giving the glory to God; he leaves indeed a vacant place where once was his station of private or conspicuous usefulness, but that vacancy is not a blank, it is supplied to his friends and associates; not merely by the empty memorial of his virtues and his bright qualities, but by the

conviction that the fountain whence they sprung is not dried up, that the source of those graces flows abundantly for them, and by the feeling too, that those excellencies of his were not as flowers to grow for a moment, and fade for ever, but that they had in them an immortal vitality, that the same principles which carried him in honour and integrity through the snares and trying circumstances of life, are now leading him in joy and blessedness through the bright scenes of Paradise—that the spirit of loving obedience to his Heavenly Father's will which made him, here, unwearied in doing good, actuates him, now, in that world of sight where no interruptions nor languors compel him to lament the imperfections of his faith.

Such a character was that of the Rev. John Belfrage, as exhibited to us in the well-written "Memorial" of his son, coadjutor and successor to the Rev. Henry Belfrage of Falkirk. He was born at Colliston, Kinrossshire, Feb. 2, 1736, and he was peculiarly happy in the enjoyment of a liberal and pious education under the guidance and inspection of enlightened parents. His mother, in particular, appears to have been distinguished by high literary, and even classical attainments, and to have fostered in his mind the early predilection which he manifested for the ministerial office. This disposition was

confirmed by intercourse with his maternal grandfather, the Rev. Andrew Ure, a man of consistent holiness, and eminent talents.—“Young as he was, he marked with deep interest the piety of his manner, the calmness of his dwelling, his studious habits, his delight in the service of God, and his benevolent care of his parish; nor did he ever forget the solemnity and kindness of the venerable man, when, like Jacob blessing his grandsons, he laid his hand on his head, and besought the God who had fed him all his life long, to bless the child. In going to visit him on one occasion, he met with a deliverance which he remembered with lively gratitude. It was in the winter season; and in passing over a river in the way, the ice broke when he was in the middle of it, and it was after a dreadful struggle that he and his attendant reached the bank.... Another circumstance took place during his childhood which made a lasting impression on his mind. One of his father's servants, as he was returning home from the limekilns, was struck dead by lightning; he was conveyed to his master's house, and the sad spectacle, joined with the cries of his wife and children, whom the report of the afflictive event had brought to the place, strongly affected him. In the course of his life, the remembrance of it occurred to him in every tempest of this kind, and though he was far from encouraging the tremors of ignorance or superstition, and placed unshaken confidence in Him who directs the storm, his soul was filled at such periods with solemn thought, and he censured levity on such occasions as both foolish and presumptuous.”

After a regular academic initiation into the elementary processes of instruction, he was sent, at the early age of thirteen, to the college of Edinburgh, where he dis-

tinguished himself by his proficiency in learning, and by his sobriety of conduct. Having completed the usual course, he was placed under the theological tuition of the Rev. James Fisher of Glasgow, then professor of divinity to the Associate Synod. While occupied in these studies, he engaged as tutor in a family residing in one of the western islands of Scotland, and during this interval was called to visit his excellent mother in her last illness. The duties of his office prevented him from remaining to witness the closing scene, but he had the strong consolation of hearing her express “her firm hope in Christ,” and of receiving her emphatic farewell and blessing. When the season returned for resuming his studies at Glasgow, Mr. B. quitted his tutorship; and notwithstanding the most urgent invitations to return, declined a renewal of his engagement. On the completion of his theological course, he received his license to preach from the Associate Presbytery of Perth and Dunfermline, July 25th, 1757, and, having received a call from two congregations, the matter was referred to the Synod, which decided in favour of Falkirk, where he was ordained on the 6th of Sep. 1758, and where he continued to labour until the termination of his course. His first sermon after his ordination was from the words—“I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified”—and from this grand canon of his faith and ministry he never swerved. As a preacher he was judicious, interesting, instructive, and he appears to have been able frequently to employ that “simple pathos” which is the most impressive mode of addressing an audience. His diligence was exemplary; during part of the year he preached four times—too often, we should say, by one half—on the Sabbath; once

a year he visited and catechised the whole of his congregation; he had weekly meetings with the young; and every two years examined the communicants under his charge. When we have added that he was an early riser, and a conscientious student, we shall have described a model to which it were to be wished that every minister would conform. He was an active and useful member of the ecclesiastical courts connected with that branch of the Secession to which he belonged. He was four times elected moderator of the Associate Synod, and was repeatedly employed in important negotiations. His last efforts in official business "were devoted to the support of an overture for a more explicit recognition of the great principles of religious liberty. This laudable object was artfully misrepresented, and the friends of it were, in some quarters, subjected to much obloquy, yet his firmness was never shaken amidst the tumults of the people, and his mild wisdom was happily adapted to soften and to convince opponents."

Two years after his ordination he married a young lady, who proved a blessing to her husband and to her numerous family. Of four sons, the first died early; the second and third lived to embark in commercial and professional pursuits, and died in the West Indies; the fourth chose the ministerial office, and was elected by the congregation as the colleague and successor of his excellent father.

Throughout the whole period of his pastoral charge he was preserved in health, with the exception of an intermittent attack in the summer of 1763. On that occasion he visited the Highlands for the advantage of a bracing air, but not, as it was intended, for that of leisure and ease. He found himself surrounded by flocks without a shepherd; by Christians in name

without the blessing of a Christian ministry, and John Belfrage was not a man to consult his own requirements when the exigencies of others called for relief. Weakness did not deter him from preaching, and his family worship was attended by numbers to whom he addressed the counsels of eternity. From that date he was enabled to continue an unbroken series of labours until the summer of 1797, when a calculous disease, to which he had been constitutionally liable, came on him with aggravated force. Amid the excruciating tortures of that terrible visitation Christ was his refuge, and a covenant God his sure confidence. Towards the close of the year his sufferings never abated, and he attended to a portion of his pastoral duties through the winter, but in the spring, pain resumed its empire, and, with little relaxation, retained its mastery until the powers of life ceased their ineffectual conflict. "He preached some discourses before this attack, on Lamentations, iii. 24—*The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him*; and the last sermon which he delivered, was on Deuteronomy, xxxiii. 25—*As thy days are, so shall thy strength be*.... Though unable to preach after the first sabbath of April, he attended public worship till near the end of that month, when his pain and debility increased to such a degree that he could not leave his apartment. In this great fight of affliction he was as meek and devout as before. To a friend who called on him and said—'it is a great matter to get above the fear of death'—he replied—'It is an interest in Christ, which can alone give safety in death, and I trust that I am no stranger to it.' He remarked that faith most effectually repressed the fears of nature and of guilt, and that he looked for stability and vigour to his faith to him who is the Author and Fi-

nisher of faith. His mind seemed to dwell on that title, and he said,—‘Christ is all in faith, he forms, cherishes, and perfects it’—and he added—‘He is all to faith.’ When that text was repeated, *unto you that believe He is precious*, he said,—‘O how precious!’.... To his wife he said—‘Thy Maker is thine husband’—to his children—‘I have left you all on God’—and to his assistant in the ministry—‘The Lord is God all sufficient, walk before Him, and be perfect.’—On the last sabbath of his life, when his family came in from public worship, he said,—‘My heart was with you, I am trying to raise it to the temple above, where a rest, a sabbath, remaineth for the people of God. I have long preached salvation by Christ, my wish is to join the great multitude above,’—and, with his eye turned to his family, he added,—‘and to be joined by all I love on earth, in singing salvation to God and to the Lamb for ever.’” The welfare of his flock was near his heart, but, though the modesty of his biographer restrains him from speaking out on this point, it is evident that he felt he was leaving them to a

worthy successor, and that the work so long carried on, with the divine assistance, by the pious father, would be continued, under the same blessing, by the excellent son. “On the last day of his life his sufferings were extreme, yet his fortitude never failed. Feeble and broken as his voice was, it was heard in the psalms that were sung, and he repeatedly intimated his wish that his family should engage in prayer beside him; and while they sat or stood near his bed, they saw in the calmness of his manner the serenity of his mind, and in his looks and gestures the workings of faith, hope, and charity. When he felt his end approaching, he expressed, in a faltering voice, his attachment to his family, declared that Christ was all his hope, and his parting intercession and blessing was his last expression of piety and love. In a short time after it he entered into rest, and, like David, having served his generation according to the will of God, he fell asleep.” He died May 14th, 1798, in the 63d year of his age and the 40th of his ministry.

SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES, &c.

No. XLIX.

CHRIST THE DOOR TO GOD'S FOLD.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”
John, x. 1.

THERE is nothing more remarkable, nothing more disastrous in the conduct of men respecting their eternal interests, than their obstinate determination to overlook the plain counsels and injunctions of God in his word, and to follow out the misleadings of their own imaginations and im-

pulses. Throughout the divine word there is no truth more clearly revealed—none that lies more completely at the very foundation of the Christian's hope and security, than this;—that no man can come unto the Father but by Christ. He is the door; by Him if any man enter in to the fold of God, he shall be saved; but if, in the perverseness of his understanding or the waywardness of his affections, he seek to invent some other method of salvation, or to obtain the divine favour through some other medium, dark-

ness and peril beset his path, disappointment and despair await him at its close. And yet, though this be written as with a sunbeam on the page of revelation, though it give its peculiar and saving character to the Gospel, such is the infatuation of mankind, that they prefer their own destructive devices to the brightest manifestations of heavenly wisdom and goodness, risk their eternal all on a voluntary delusion, and, unless arrested by an arm of gracious power, go down to the grave in dependance on a vain hope, which must inevitably end in unutterable and everlasting shame.

In their immediate application, the words before us, with those of their immediate context, refer to the character of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the great master and guardian of his church; and to the falsehood of the pretensions of all who take up, on any other grounds than those of subordination to Him, and directions from him, the office of guide and teacher of their brethren. But on a large construction, and in connexion with the subsequent passages of the parable, they have unquestionable reference to all who seek salvation in any other way than in that of a simple dependance upon Christ as the way, the truth, and the life. In whatever light we contemplate the profession of Christianity, it will be found to rest on Him as its strength and centre. The exhibition of the Saviour as the great object of faith and love, to the exclusion of all inferior attachments—His exaltation as the only hope and refuge of a perishing world—His manifestation as the sole medium of access to a throne of grace, and a covenant—these are among the essential peculiarities of the gospel, and their effects on human character will determine its eternal destinies. It is nothing less

than an immortal interest that is put in jeopardy by negligence or self-will in this point. It may be profitable to us then, in this view of our subject, to consider it as suggesting to us the following heads of consideration.

I. That our entrance into the Church of God can only be by one prescribed way.

II. The fatal consequences of error on this cardinal point.

III. The means of security.

I. Let us direct our attention to *the one prescribed way of entrance into the fold of God.* In more senses than one, man may be said to have sought out many inventions, and it might be difficult to determine which has been most conspicuous, the fertility or the vanity of his imagination in devising plans for deprecating the vengeance of heaven and recommending himself to the divine favour. A secret consciousness of guilt and consequent misery, seems to be a part of the law written on the heart; we find even the untutored savage anxiously averting, by sacrifices and expiations, the wrath of his offended deities, and endeavouring to secure their approbation by the observance of a regulated ritual. The revelation of life and immortality has scattered these delusions, and brought to light the character of God, the rebellion of man, and the covenant of peace. But it contains no principle of accommodation to the depraved or the wayward propensities of man; it makes no compromise with his pride or his lusts. His loftiness it levels with the dust, and it commands the crucifixion of flesh and sense. It is an amnesty offered by the Almighty to his rebellious creatures, and it becomes not his awful majesty to place in abeyance the purity of his nature, the perfection of his justice, or the supremacy of his rule. The great scheme of substitution preserved all these un-

impaired, and opened a way through the veil into the holiest. The sacrifice of the Cross, the voluntary humiliation, the death, and resurrection of the Redeemer, was the great sin-offering by virtue of which all who believe on him are made heirs of the promises and partakers of the divine nature. But let it not be forgotten that there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved,—that in the very nature of divine things it is clear to every humble and unprejudiced enquirer that there can be no hopeful effort for the favour of Jehovah on the ground of human competency—that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.”

II. We are to consider the *destructive consequences of error in this essential point*. There are subordinate particulars even of divine verity, in which, however desirable agreement may be, it is safe to differ. In the present imperfect state of human knowledge and human temper, it cannot be but that individuals under varying circumstances of education and association, will infer different conclusions from the same premises; and within certain limits, while under the controul of Christian charity, these variations may be productive of little mischief, in some cases, perhaps of positive good, inasmuch as they excite to a more diligent inquisition into the dictates of revealed wisdom. But when opinion grows rank and invades the simplicity and teachableness of spirit which is the only proper frame for scripture study—when

it presses on the barriers interposed between human presumption and the deep things of Jehovah—when it dallies with those vital truths which are inseparably connected with salvation—then it becomes necessary to make a firm stand against its injurious encroachments, and to lift up a warning voice of awful denunciation against the miserable hardihood which is tempting its own ruin, and provoking its own destruction. When Almighty goodness has been pleased to offer pardon to the guilty on his own terms, is it for them to insist on counter propositions and to stipulate for a different dispensation of grace and pardon? When infinite compassion opens a new and certain way of access to itself, and issues pardons of unbounded freeness, shall the wretched objects of this liberal bounty carp at the modes of its distribution, and make the freedom which is its marking character, the plea and pretext of their cavils? Tremble, ye perverse and malicious, lest ye perish in your gain-saying. No error in religion can be so fatal as that, which causing its dupe to stumble at the very outset of his course, compels him to wander through devious ways throughout his subsequent progress. ‘Repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,’ are the gracious preparations for the Christian journey, and whosoever thinks to enter on it without these, fails at the first step. The way to the Father is through the mediation of the Son, and if this be come short of, whatever we may take as a substitute—our own efforts—vague notions of the divine mercy—perversions of Scripture doctrine—will miserably abandon us in the hour of need. “No man cometh unto the Father but by me,” is the Redeemer’s express asseveration, and to act in contempt of it is death.

III. We are to enquire *what*

are the means of security against this fatal error. It might be answered in few words—obedience to the voice of God, and a simple regard to its plain dictates. It is quite impossible for any one to err in this point, without a deliberate preference of his own uncertain views to the express and unalterable will of Jehovah. When it is found that, of two distinct modes of explaining the divine word, one rests upon the hazardous and unaided exercise of the understanding, while the other has for its basis an anxious and humble desire to ascertain the design of the great author, accompanied with an explicit reference to his assistance as the only unerring interpreter of his own law, there can be no reasonable ground for hesitation as to which is the most to be relied on. An humble and entire dependance upon God, an habitual use of prayer as the only fit preparative for the study of heavenly truth; a deep and experimental conviction of our own incapacity for the reception of saving knowledge without a supernatural work of internal renovation;—these are tried and effectual securities against dangerous error in the great concern. Let us then avail ourselves of these simple and obvious means. Let us “pray without ceasing;” approach the throne of grace with

the meek incense of our gratitude and praise, and with the prevailing offering of the contrite heart. Let this be our petition, that we may be taught by the Holy Spirit the truth as it is in Jesus, that we may learn the lessons of humility and self-suspicion, by the contemplation of our own depravity in the mirror of God’s holy word, and that, under a heartfelt consciousness of our infirmity and insufficiency, we may ever look to the fountain of wisdom and inspiration for instruction and for guidance.

It is only by the impression on our hearts, by a divine agency, of the great truths which we have thus lightly touched, that we can be made wise unto salvation. Fluctuating amid the uncertainties of his imagination, and the wanderings of his affections, man knows not where to fix, and when left to his own resources, will inevitably err in his final decision, but when enlightened from above, taught of God, brought nigh by the blood of Christ, living in the exercise of a true faith, renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, he will be rescued from his cherished delusions, enabled to enter by the door into the sheepfold, and, both here and in the realm of glory, to follow Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, whithersoever he goeth.

ORIGINAL ESSAYS, COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

ON TRANQUILLITY OF MIND.

*Æquum memento rebus in arduis
Servare mentem; non secus in bonis
Ab insolenti temperatam
Letitia, moriture Delli.*

O Delli! as you were born to die, take care that you preserve a temper of mind even and calm in times of difficulty, and free from insolent exultation in prosperity.

WHAT is that tranquillity of mind

which poets and sages, moralists and divines have so warmly recommended? Where is it to be found, and how is it to be maintained and preserved? It is not apathy, nor indolence, nor that stillness and stagnation of the faculties, which generates the foulest corruptions, and infects the region around it with a deadly pestilence. Man was formed to think, to feel, and

to act, with reference to some definite objects and ends; and no sooner, therefore, does he sink into sloth, or shut himself up in selfish insensibility, than he forgets or opposes his destiny as a moral agent. When he ceases to be obedient to the general law of his Maker, and useful to his fellow creatures, in vain does he expect to be happy; the oppression of lassitude and the vexation of disappointment, can neither be obviated nor cured.

It is not uncommon, for the veriest slaves and drudges of the world, who rise up early, sit up late, and eat the bread of care, to dream that they shall escape all their troubles, when the propitious day comes, which allows them to quit the toils and shackles of business, and retire to the quiet rural retreat. The period long anticipated arrives, and now, *diu cum dignitate*, leisure with dignity, is to make them happy! But alas! they find themselves scarcely settled in their charming villa, before experience has chased away the visions of imagination.

Absence of occupation, is not rest,
A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed.

The first perception perhaps of the fallacy, is at the moment which had been previously appropriated to the fulness of joy. The citizen thus retiring, invites a party of his old friends, who are to witness his munificence, and partake his hospitable cheer, and in return to load him with soothing congratulations. But the day which opens fair, grows cloudy, and pours down rain,—some of the party cannot, and others will not come,—and the rest have not enough of good taste or good temper, to infuse the relish of pleasure into the festive banquet. The master makes many a laboured and ill-concealed effort, to convince the company that he is, and they *might be* happy, but without success. The scene, like the day, has gradually become dull and monotonous, and no expedi-

ent avails to disperse the gloom, to kindle vivacity, or to communicate enjoyment.

But if men can neither possess tranquillity of mind in the harassing and multifarious pursuits of business, nor in the stillness of seclusion and solitude, where is it to be found? It is no where to be found, and ought not therefore to be expected in any association or arrangement of external circumstances. There are certain principles, dispositions, and habits, which are absolutely essential to the blessing of which we are now speaking. A Pagan bard could ask the questions, "What makes a man at peace with himself? What gives pure tranquillity?" But a Christian only has the means of giving a satisfactory answer to these momentous enquiries. In the sacred volume, he possesses a revelation of the Divine Will, able to set his soul at rest on those grand points, which unassisted reason labours hard to settle, but must ever leave involved in dark and perplexing uncertainty. There the attributes of deity, the wonders of providence, and the blessings of redemption, are unveiled. A light from the eternal source of wisdom and truth, presents in the most vivid, distinct, and impressive view the high relations and responsibilities, the duties and prospects of our species.

The sceptic, whatever he may pretend or affect, has no solid basis of support, no elements sufficient to ensure tranquillity. Mr. Adam Smith, seems to triumph in the fortitude and calmness which David Hume displayed at the near approach of dissolution. But it has been well observed, that a moment of vivacity upon the visit of a friend, will not conduct us to the recesses of the heart, or discover its feelings in the hours of solitude. This infidel has confessed in the most explicit terms, that his principles were not calcu-

lated to administer consolation to a thinking mind. The following passage from his *Treatise of Human Nature*, may be adduced as evidence: "I am affrighted and confounded with that forlorn condition, in which I am placed by my philosophy. When I look abroad, I foresee on every side dispute, contradiction, and distraction.—When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance. Where am I, or what? To what causes do I owe my existence, and to what condition shall I return? I am confounded with these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness." That philosophy has surely but little to recommend it, which places a man in this forlorn solitude, this labyrinth of perplexity, this yawning gulph of despondency. The firm believer in revelation, sees both whence he derived his being, and whence he must draw his blessedness. This religion not only illuminates the path he treads, but also opens a vista into the eternal world, and gilds with alluring lustre the regions beyond the grave. But an avowed attachment to divine truth, will not secure inward tranquillity, unless there be likewise a fiducial reliance on the atonement and righteousness of Christ. When the soul is pierced and agitated with conscious guilt, nothing but pardon of sin can heal the wound, and allay the commotion. Travellers have assured us, that oil poured into a stormy sea, calms its raging turbulence; and whether this be a fact or an ingenious fiction, it is certain, that an infusion of that pardon and peace which the gospel brings, powerfully tends to compose the stormy elements of the mind. The profligate is as far from tranquillity as the sceptic; and neither the one nor the other, can find rest to his spirit, in the mazes of error, or the

dark and deadly ways of vice. False principles bewilder the understanding, domineering and malignant passions lacerate the heart. On the other hand, divine truth, cordially received, leads a man to repose his trust entirely in Christ, the all-sufficient Saviour, to abandon the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, and to follow after holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord. Grace and peace, which are always joined in the apostolic benedictions, are invariably connected in the experience of the Christian. It is not here meant to insinuate, that all pious men have a tranquillity which knows no interruption, for the contrary is but too evident; yet they have the best, or rather the only means of attaining and securing the blessing. "Amidst this noisy and contentious world," observes Ely Bates, "it might have been expected, that the church, at least, would have proved a calm and quiet refuge; yet the case is often much otherwise. Besides its tossings from without, this harbour is subject to many commotions of its own; it is the best, however, we can meet with on this side heaven." To enjoy tranquillity, it is necessary to live near to God in the exercise of faith and prayer; to refuse conformity to the maxims and manners of an evil world; and to deny indulgence to those sensual appetites and propensities, which never fail to grow clamorous and impetuous, without due self-government. No stores of wealth, of science, and of literature; no arts of refinement and policy; no solitary study, or social intercourse, can diffuse a placid and permanent calm, over the soul which remains alienated from that glorious Being, who is the only fountain of felicity. By intimate communion with God, we taste pleasures which at once elevate and purify the mind; we ascend, as on eagles' wings, above

the tempests and agitations of this lower world ; we pierce within the veil, and after viewing and anticipating the sublime delights of heaven, learn to look with holy indifference on the beggarly elements of earth. In the exercise of faith and prayer, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeps both the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. The turbulence of fleshly passions now subsides ; the promises and threatenings of the world have lost their power ; and all the interests of time are held in subservience to the infinitely superior interests of eternity. Most Christians probably possess this mental tranquillity and unruffled confidence at times ; and it is surely desirable, that it should become a more settled habit. And what should hinder those who have the word of God in their hands, and constant access to his throne of grace, from attaining this high privilege ? Why not pray earnestly and perseveringly, " That the God of hope may fill them with joy and peace in believing, through the power of the Holy Ghost ? " " The Lord God is a sun and a shield ; he will give grace and glory ; and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

May 21, 1824. AMICUS B.

ON THE GROWTH OF LIBERAL PRINCIPLES, IN REFERENCE TO THE MARRIAGE LAWS.

(To the Editors.)

GENTLEMEN,—I wish I could unite with your very respectable correspondent at Thames Ditton, in congratulations on the growth of liberal principles. The two instances which he cites are certainly very pleasing ; but at the same time, it is somewhat painful to reflect, that they become striking in great measure from the infrequency of such expressions. The issue of the question which elicited the observations referred

to, proves the estimation in which such liberal concessions are held. Marriage, I conceive, is the inalienable right of every man, given to him by his Maker, and all human inventions, which would in any measure restrict its free exercise, are so many oppositions to the designs of the Almighty. The only laws, I conceive, which human authority has a right to enact, in reference to this subject, are such as tend to make the contract binding and inviolable. Some may consider marriage, if they please, as a religious ceremony,—others, as a civil contract. The Church of Rome has made it a sacrament. And the Church of England enjoins its celebration at what is called *the altar*, where the sacraments of the church are usually administered. Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. I consider it only as a civil contract ; but can have no objection to its being accompanied by a religious service. Yet to make this service impressive, it should certainly be administered in the way most calculated to affect the consciences of those engaging therein.

With the religious opinions of Unitarians, I can entertain no sympathy ; but as fellow-citizens, they are entitled to enjoy all the privileges of society, in common with others. And civil and political hindrances ought on no account to be thrown in their way, because of their conscientious adoption of different religious sentiments. It is mockery to compel them to go through a religious ordeal repugnant to their feelings, to prevent their deprivation of the first social blessing bestowed in common on all mankind by their Maker. With regard also to Dissenters of other denominations—if a religious ceremony is intended to have any effect, it is natural to imagine, this effect is more likely to be produced by its being per-

formed by the pastor of their choice, who would be more likely to excite a salutary impression upon the minds of the parties, than the stranger who officiates at the next church,—and who is very probably, as is often the case, a person engaged by the incumbent to perform for him, what is considered the *drudgery* of his office—to kneel at the “*altar*” under such circumstances for the blessing of the priest—and to give over to him the ring, that it might pass through his “*consecrated*” hands, to be again returned, to be placed upon the finger of the bride, with these words—“*With this ring I thee wed; with my body I thee worship*”—is altogether a service inconsistent with the simplicity of New Testament worship, and much less calculated to afford to the mind of a pious Dissenter those religious feelings, which a service performed by his own pastor would be likely to inspire. I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

A CONGREGATIONAL DISSENTER.

ON RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES.

THAT controversy has often been shamefully conducted, and made the vehicle of the most obnoxious feelings—that it has often assumed the appearance of solemn trifling, or children’s play;—that it has often kindled inextinguishable flames of discord;—that it naturally tends, *unless duly watched*, to injure the temper, and to wither spiritual affection, no sensible polemic will deny. Yet, let it be remembered, by spirited and well-managed controversy, our Lord and his apostles established “the everlasting Gospel;” and, next to miracles, it seems the chief weapon of their warfare, “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” Who could be more frequently involved in pole-

mical discussions? and what else are the epistles of Paul and his brethren, which their adversaries acknowledged, were “weighty and powerful?” For what purpose did Christ furnish his disciples with “a mouth and wisdom,” which all their enemies could not gainsay or resist? As to opposing the truth, is not the world the same now as it was then, except that it is more capable of opposition? Have we any reason to suppose, that this enmity will be subdued by other means than Christ originally employed? In the apostolic age, what was the Gospel cause, but a continued scene of controversy? In our day, a Missionary in India, without controversial talents well directed, would soon be overpowered by a disciple of *Brahma*. In past ages, the glorious reformation was triumphantly carried forward by the *arguments* of Luther and his compeers; indeed, other weapons they had none, and would have disdained their assistance.

It is a common objection, that controversy always deadens the zeal and spirituality of our churches, by its chilling influence; but this seems to be a great mistake, for the contrary effect has often resulted; it did so especially at the Reformation, when such as were fast asleep, or rather “dead in trespasses and sins,” were roused to life and action. That in a controversial age, churches have sometimes declined in spiritual zeal, cannot be denied, for the sacred Spirit flies from the realms of unholy strife; but this declension was owing not to the controversies *per se*; but to their being mis-managed, as to subjects, method, style, and *temper*; in addition to other causes as concomitants. Has not Great Britain been rescued from darkness by such writers as Wickliffe, Clarke, Chillingworth, and the famous Bishop Jewell? By the preachers

of Boyle's Lectures, Berry Street Sermons, and the Morning Exercises, and by a host of such controversialists? Not to mention living names, who can think lightly of such controversialists, as Owen, Baxter, Edwards, Gill, Hervey, Fuller, and a thousand more? Had their works any chilling effect upon spiritual religion? Were they not the cause of its revival? Is it not one sign of an approaching Millennium, that "knowledge shall increase," and darkness fly away from the brightness of the coming of the Son of man?

In what manner would the good old puritans and nonconformists have maintained their integrity of character, had they not by controversy disarmed their persecutors? Yet, where shall we find more savoury, experimental, searching, practical divinity, than their works collectively exhibit? To the objection, that controversy inevitably sours the temper, and clouds the mind, the works of Watts, Edwards, Doddridge, Hervey, Campbell, (of Aberdeen,) and Dr. Edward Williams, with the well-known amiable dispositions of these men, are an abundant confutation.

It is of much importance to consider, that the only basis of true morality is divine truth, attended by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, which shows the absolute necessity of previously settling the question—what is truth? This cannot be done effectually without viewing a subject on all sides—in all its bearings; and it should ever be recollected, that the Holy Bible is eminently a controversial book, and has stirred up more strife than any book ever written. Being no friend to needless, injurious, and especially not to angry controversies, I respectfully offer the following hints to all who are really called to this work.

1. *The subject should be wor-*

thy of debate. To controvert every idle proposition, or fanciful theory, would be as unprofitably vain, as it would be vexatious and without end; but when a serious attack on the vitals of religion is managed with deeply-learned and ingenious sophistry, in a style like the droppings of the honeycomb, it must either be refuted, or the cause will suffer.

2. *Antagonists are of importance.* Sentiments gain or lose influence from the character and qualifications of their abettors; the greater this influence is likely to be, the more such an affair claims notice, nor ought a name to screen a system from fair examination, or its just fate. "*Amicus Socrates; Amicus Plato; sed magis Amicus veritas.*" Let a buffoon alone be his own passionate admirer; let an abusive man waste his strength till he feels it gone; let an angry splenetic be consumed, without pity, in his own fires.

3. *The time is of some consequence.* As we should know when to *speak*, let us also learn when to *write*. "A word in season, how good is it!" A controversy well timed, on a subject much wanted, conducted with a Christian temper, enhances its own value; and delay, but especially *haste*, may defeat the best intentions.

4. Above all, let us "speak the truth in love," and banish for ever those illiberal feelings which resemble the irruptions of a volcano. We live in an age, when this amiable practice is gaining ground; and, being a constant reader of your valuable miscellany, I am happy to see you admit, occasionally, polemical essays, when managed with due decorum. By so doing, you will certainly contribute much to instruct your readers, and to promote the purity and union of our Redeemer's kingdom. PACIFICUS.

THE PASTOR'S RETROSPECT.

No. IV.

(The Rescued Suicide.)

(Having received the following from a friend, on whose veracity you may confidently rely, I substitute it in the place of another narrative I intended to send you this month, with the hope that it may prove both more profitable and interesting to your readers than any thing you have yet received from EAGLET.)

(To EAGLET.)

My dear Friend,

THE increased pleasure with which I have read the Pastor's Retrospect, in the Congregational Magazine, since you informed me of the fact that these papers were written by yourself, has reminded me that I am in possession of at least one or two brief histories that might not inappropriately appear in the series of your letters, should they be judged of sufficient interest. I have therefore here attempted to record one case, for the truth of which, in every particular, I now make myself responsible to you and the public: and perhaps you may find other brethren who may submit to you, or the Editors, similar communications of well-authenticated facts. I confess the example you have set has afforded me great pleasure, because I hope it will be followed by other aged and experienced ministers, and because I think many such interesting and striking illustrations of the power of divine grace are allowed to slip out of our memories, or are restricted to a narrow circle of private friends, when they might be made generally useful and pleasing.

Without further introduction, I shall proceed to inform you, that as I was musing one Monday morning, by my fire-side, and pondering, with no very lively feelings, the labours and engagements of the preceding day,—for perhaps you know, from experience, that the lassitude of a Monday morning is frequently accompanied with great lowness of spi-

rits, especially in the dull months of the winter season. While I was thus engaged, or rather disengaged, from either serious business or laborious study, a rap at the door roused me from my reverie—a stranger was ushered in, with the brief introduction—"this person wishes to speak with you, Sir." I arose from my chair, and saw a respectable middle-aged female standing in the avenue of the door, waiting my invitation with no very calm or confident appearance. Not unused to the countenance of sorrow, nor to the calls of strangers, I was yet moved in no ordinary degree; for I saw, in an instant, that there was something unusual in the mind as well as in the countenance of this stranger. I approached her, and begged that she would walk in, at the same time offering her a chair. My visitant was too much agitated to allow her to mention her name—a gush of feeling almost overcame expression—she softly thanked me, and gladly availed herself of the chair I had offered. In this situation I had an opportunity of observing the strong emotions that were working in her mind, and of addressing to her a few words adapted to calm her feelings, and restore composure and self-possession. However, for some minutes she found no utterance—and it was not till a flood of tears had given her relief that she could say any thing. I sat in silence—and at last she began her narrative nearly in the following words—"O, Sir, I am a poor wretched sinner who have come to tell you something of what God has done for me. Many months ago I had an unhappy quarrel with my husband about the management of our domestic concerns, and without troubling you with the particulars, I may in brief say, that we were both violent and obstinate; neither would yield in the least to the other, and the affair ended in

my declaring that I would live with him no longer. I immediately prepared to quit the house, and leave my children who were all grown up: before I did so, my husband said, 'now mind what you do—you know I am a firm man—if you quit my house, you shall never enter it again unless God change your heart.' I should have told you, Sir, that he has for many years been a hearer and professor of the gospel. However, this had no effect upon me; my heart was too proud to submit, and I left my home and my family, and came immediately into this neighbourhood, where I have some friends, and through whom I obtained a lodging at an adjoining village. But oh! how shall I tell you, Sir, what I there suffered." Here she was so overcome as to be obliged to stop for some minutes. She seemed to shudder at the attempted recital, just as one who has approached a dreadful brink, and looked down to a terrific gulf, but turned away—trembles long after at the bare recollection, and seems to renew in imagination the very giddiness which was felt on the awful spot. The remainder of her narrative was so broken and interrupted, that I must give the substance rather than the precise words—the general impression instead of the full detail. It appeared that after the storm of passion had subsided, in which she had left her home, reflections of the most distressing kind had taken possession of her mind—these were fostered by the seclusion and solitude she had chosen, and she began deeply to feel the misery of her situation, separated from all dearest to her in the world, and under the painful reflection of having forsaken, upon very insufficient ground, a husband with whom she had passed a considerable portion of her life, and enjoyed much happiness. This state of things was calculated deeply to afflict and dis-

tress a mind unused to solitude and reflection. Her agony increased more and more every day—till she was led generally to reflect upon her sinful state, and to review the whole of her past life with the deepest concern—but this was more than she could bear. Her spirit was agonized by every view she took of herself, and after struggling for some days with emotions which she could neither resist nor alleviate, she longed—but oh! it was as she said, under the subtle and powerful influence of the tempter—she longed to escape from the overwhelming sense of present misery. There appeared to be no prospect of restoration to her husband—his last words rung still in her ear—and she despaired both of reconciliation to him, and of peace within her own breast. She had thought a thousand times, but in vain, of a return to her home—her former peace—her family. There appeared no place for repentance—her unchanged heart and her husband's resolution precluded the possibility. She looked around for comfort, but there was none.—It was a sweet rural spot where she lodged, not far from a deep river—and as she paced the little garden day after day, and looked in vain for comfort or composure, every thing seemed happy but herself. The smiling flowers she contemplated with disgust, the gay fields, the busy people, the happy children, the merry warbling of the little birds, all around did but mock her grief;—she seemed the sport of nature without, and of passion within—and why should she live any longer!—it was possible to escape from it all!—was it not? she trembled, and was agitated, when the suggestion first arose, but it promised much—an end to the anguish of a broken heart, and by degrees she wrought her mind up to the fatal resolution. Nor were means distant or difficult of

access—as she continued firm to her purpose, the thought crossed her mind, that the dreadful deed might easily be effected by casting herself, not into the river, but into a *deep well* in the garden, down which she had more than once looked, and seen in its depth and darkness a picture of her own sad heart. Well—for I would not lengthen the sad detail—at last she prepared all things for her purpose, and in the evening, when all was still, and her design aided by the shadows falling around, she left the door of the cottage, and walked down the garden with a resolution now to throw herself in—hasty, agitated, fearful, and trembling were her steps—How near to death!—but a step indeed, and the grave would embrace her! how near to eternal death! Not a step, for she seemed already its prisoner. Suddenly in this phrenzy of her mind, the thought struck her like a vivid flash of lightning across the darkness of a tempestuous night—**GOD HAS HAD MERCY ON AS GREAT SINNERS AS MYSELF—and why not on me? Yes, he may on me!** This was a parapet around the well—a brazen wall—or, like a strong hand, it held her that she could not go forward—it forced her back. She withdrew from the scene of the temptation, thinking, at least, to defer the deed till she had found more courage and firmness. I shall not attempt to describe the night she passed—the alternate mastery of hope and fear—the thought of the desperate act she had been almost miraculously kept from committing, and the climax of guilt and sin, which it seemed to crown. It was a night of terror and agitation not to be described. Happily for her, it was succeeded by the Sabbath dawn—calm, yet cheerful;—and as soon as she found a suitable opportunity, she expressed her wish to a neighbour, who occasionally attended our place of worship, to accom-

pany her that morning, if agreeable, or to go alone, if the way were pointed out to her. The neighbour accordingly agreed to go with her, and at the appointed time they entered the place entire strangers to me—unknown and unobserved; but well known by Him that judgeth the heart—the text was the first thing that struck the attention of the unhappy woman—and it came from heaven to her heart—it was this, “when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” This seemed to her so like a continuation of the kind and gracious interposition of the preceding afternoon, that she could think of nothing else—she was lost in the text, and as she expressed herself to me—recollected, or indeed heard, almost nothing of the sermon. Her whole heart was occupied with the goodness of God in sending her there to hear that encouraging word—to find that seasonable blessing of divine help in such a season of fierce temptation. She described herself as experiencing that *standard* lifted up in her heart, and as particularly comforted in the thought, that God should regard, and so eminently bless one so unworthy and wretched. I need not dwell on her subsequent feelings. She left the meeting-house quite another creature—rejoicing in the divine goodness, and reflecting on the marvellous deliverance wrought for her. Day after day passed on, and the Spirit of the Lord still lifted up a standard against the fierce temptation. Indeed, now, she had bruised Satan under her feet, or according to the word of God, in resisting the devil, she had found him flee from her. All the blessedness of the Gospel opened to her view, and she embraced the Saviour in all his rich and free grace to sinners. After her victory over the temptation,

she continued, as might be supposed, a regular and devout attendant on the ministry of the Gospel—improving and enjoying every season as a divine repast. Six months had thus passed away, during which she had undergone an entire change of heart, but had heard nothing of her family or her husband. Her anxiety to be reconciled to them, and to let them know what God had done for her soul, every day increased, and under this uneasiness, she had introduced herself to me, to seek advice, and to implore my interference.

After due investigation, and a diligent inquiry into the truth of her statement, and particularly as to the real cause of her withdrawal from her family, I found that I could not withhold what kind offices I might be able to render, and on her request, I addressed a letter to her husband, informing him of the whole that had transpired, and stating the reason there was to hope, that what he had referred to in his resolution,—to exclude her, till her heart was changed—had really taken place. She soon followed my letter, and met with a most cordial reception. Every thing past was forgiven, and they both cheerfully united together in praising God, for his unutterable goodness and mighty grace. The joy of the family cannot be painted by words—it was like the joy of them that find great spoil, or as those that escape unhurt from a shipwreck, and again see those upon whose countenances they never more expected to look. I should not have ventured to commit this narrative to your hands, had I not enjoyed opportunities of ascertaining both the truth of all the facts, and the permanence of the change wrought. I have every reason to believe, that to the present hour, those individuals continue to feel the weight of their obligations, and to

enjoy the happy effects of that change, which was wrought in so remarkable a manner.

There are three important points among others, which this occurrence illustrates—*first*, the blessed influence of divine grace in families:—who can describe the joy of that house, when the industrious wife and affectionate mother was brought back? *Secondly*, let ministers of the Gospel learn, under all discouragements, to draw the bow at a venture. One such instance of usefulness, repays a life of study, prayer, and labour. *Thirdly*, here is a striking illustration of the folly of self-will, and the evil of domestic strife. Little things, when exasperated, bring on dreadful consequences. The parsimony of a too niggardly husband, and the obstinacy of a too passionate wife, had well nigh brought misery through life to the one, and eternal destruction upon the other. But the grace of God is specially exalted, by bringing out of the bad passions of both the parties, permanent happiness in this life, and the cheering hope of sharing together the great salvation of Jesus Christ.

Yours, &c. SENEX.

THE CONGREGATIONAL AND INDEPENDENT SYSTEMS.

(Reply to "An Independent.")

I FIND myself and others accused not very courteously, by "An Independent," of making "insidious attempts;" entertaining "designs;" "smuggling," "juggling," &c. Upon what ground these serious charges rest, your correspondent does not state; nor does he seem to be aware, that on his mode of proceeding, it would be quite as easy for me or others to impute to him some "design" of maintaining the cause of ultra Independence, from the love of power—self-will, pride, political democracy, &c. &c.—all which

notions, I presume not to impute to him. Let no one be deceived into the supposition, that the distinction I and others discern and maintain, is a mere novelty and an innovation upon established principles. Whether this "Independent" understands the distinction and difference between the two modes of church-government, does not appear: if he do, he cannot be altogether ignorant, that, so far from its being a novelty, it was maintained, and acted upon, by a great number of ministers and churches, from one to two hundred years back. The subject was examined by the most learned, pious, and eminent men, who graced those halcyon days of nonconformity. I will adduce some authorities to illustrate the distinction in question, and to prove that it was acted upon by men, who were among the most respectable conservators of that religious liberty, which your correspondent *imagines* their system would of necessity destroy. The authorities shall be taken both from England and America; and, first, from the "Apologetical Narrative," addressed to both Houses of Parliament, anno 1643, by the five congregational ministers, Thos. Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, Jer. Burroughs, and Sydrach Simpson.

"We could not, therefore, but judge it a safe and an allowed way, to retain the government of our several congregations, for matter of discipline within themselves, to be exercised by their own elders, whereof we had (for the most part of the time we were abroad*) three at least in each congregation, whom we were subject to: yet not claiming to ourselves an independent power in every congregation, to give account or be subject to none others; but only a full and entire power complete within ourselves, until we should be challenged to err grossly;—such as corporations enjoy, who have the power and privilege to pass sentence for life and death within themselves, and yet are accountable to the state they live in."

* Viz. in Holland.

Having distinguished themselves from *Independents*, they then proceeded to distinguish themselves from *Presbyterians*; and afterwards continue their statement as follows:

"God so ordered it, that a scandal and offence fell out between those very churches, whilst living in this banishment, (whereof we ourselves, that write these things, were then the ministers,) one of our churches having unhappily deposed one of their ministers, the other judged it not only as too sudden an act, having proceeded in a matter of so great moment without consulting their sister churches, as was publicly professed we should have done in such cases of concernment; but also in the proceedings thereof as too severe, and not managed according to the rules laid down in the word. In this case, our churches did mutually and universally acknowledge, and submit to this as a sacred and undoubted principle and supreme law, to be observed among all churches, that, as by virtue of that apostolical command, churches, as well as particular men, are bound to give no offence neither to Jew nor Gentile, nor to the churches of God they live amongst; so that in all cases of such offence, or difference, by the obligation of the common law of communion of churches, and for the vindication of the glory of Christ, which in common they hold forth, the church, or churches, challenged to offend or differ, are to submit themselves, upon the challenge of the offence or complaint of the person wronged, to the most full and open trial and examination, by other neighbour churches offended thereof, of whatever hath given the offence. And farther, that, by the virtue of the same and like law, of not partaking in other men's sins, the churches offended may, and ought, upon the impenitency of those churches, persisting in their error and miscarriage, to pronounce that heavy sentence against them, of withdrawing and renouncing all Christian communion with them, until they do repent: and farther, to declare and protest this, with the causes thereof, to all other churches of Christ, that they may do the like."

They proceed then to argue the greater efficiency of this mode of discipline beyond that of the *Presbyterian*, and thus take up their narrative:

"And for a real evidence and demonstration, both that this was then our judgment, as likewise for an instance of the effectual success of such a course

held by churches in such cases, our own practice and the blessing of God thereon, may plead and testify for us to all the world. The manage of this transaction in brief was this. That church, which with others, was most scandalized, did by letters declare their offence, requiring of the church, supposed to be offending, *in the name* and for the vindication of the honour of Christ, and the relieving the party wronged, to yield a full and public hearing before all the churches of our nation, or any other whomsoever offended, of what they could give in charge against their proceedings in that deposition of their minister, and to subject themselves to an open trial, and review of all those forepassed carriages that concerned that particular; which they most cheerfully and readily, according to the fore mentioned principles, submitted unto, in a place and state where no outward violence, nor any other external authority, either civil or ecclesiastical, would have enforced them thereunto. And, accordingly, the ministers of the church offended, with other two gentlemen of much worth, wisdom, and piety, members thereof, were sent as *messengers* from that church; and, at the introduction and entrance into that solemn assembly, the solemnity of which hath left as deep an impression upon our hearts of Christ's dreadful presence, as ever any we have been present at, it was openly and publicly professed, in a speech that was the preface to that discussion, to this effect:

— That it was the most to be abhorred maxim, that any religion hath ever made profession of, and therefore of all other the most contradictory and dishonourable unto that of Christianity, that a single and particular society of men, professing the name of Christ, and pretending to be endowed with a power from Christ, to judge them that are of the same body and society within themselves, should farther arrogate unto themselves an exemption from giving account, or being censurable 'by any other, either Christian Magistrate above them, or neighbour churches about them.'

— "So far were our judgments from that *Independent Liberty* that is imputed to us, then, when we had least dependency on this kingdom, or so much as hopes ever to abide therein in peace. And for the issue and success of this agitation, after there had been, for many days, as judiciary and full a charge, trial, and deposition of witnesses openly afore all corners of all sorts, as can be expected in any court where authority enjoins it, that church which had offended, did as publicly acknowledge their sinful aberration in it; restored their minister to his place again; and ordered a solemn day of fast-

ing to humble themselves afore God and men for their sinful carriage in it; and the party, also, which had been deposed, did acknowledge to that church wherein he had likewise sinned."

The apologists then refer to their return to England, and the necessity they found for farther reformation there, as well as in the other reformed churches; expressing their hope that it is reserved for England to set the example, in this respect, to the surrounding nations: adding as follows:

"We found, also, which was as great an affliction to us as our former troubles and banishment, our opinions and ways, wherein we might seem to differ, environed about with a cloud of mistakes and misapprehensions, and our persons with reproaches. Besides other calumnies, as of schism, &c.—that proud and insolent title of *Independency* was affixed unto us as our claim,—the very sound of which conveys to all men's apprehensions the challenge of an exemption of all churches from all subjection and dependence; or rather a trumpet of defiance against whatever power, spiritual or civil; which we do abhor and detest; or else the odious name of *Brownism*, together with all their opinions, as they have stated and maintained them, must needs be owned by us; although, upon the very first declaring our judgments in the chief and fundamental point of all church-discipline, and likewise since, it hath been acknowledged that we differ much from them. And we did then, and do here publicly profess, we believe the truth to lie and consist in a middle way betwixt that which is falsely charged on us—*Brownism*, and that which is the contention of these times, the authoritative Presbyterian government in all the proceedings and subordinations of it."

There is an entire accordance between the sentiments and practice of the Congregationalists of New England and the system above advocated. Dr. Cotton Mather, in his history of New England, describing the views of Eliot on church discipline, as those which he and his brethren highly approved, says:

"He looked upon the Congregational way as a largess of divine bounty, bestowed by the Lord Jesus Christ on his people that followed him into this wilderness, with a peculiar zeal for communion with him in his pure worship here. He perceived in it a sweet sort of tem-

perament, between rigid Presbyterianism, and levelling Brownism; so that, on the one side, the liberties of the people are not oppressed and overlaid; on the other side, the authority of the elders is not rendered insignificant; but a due balance is herein kept upon both; and hence he closed with our platform of church-discipline as being the nearest of what he had yet seen to the directions of Heaven." (Book iii. part ii. art. 5.)

Samuel Mather, son of Cotton Mather, in his truly learned and excellent "Apology for the liberties of the Churches in New England," (8vo. 1738, Boston) expresses the same views at page 21, which I would extract, but fear to encroach upon the patience of your readers.

The words of the great Dr. John Owen, are "the church that confines its duty unto the acts of its own assemblies, cuts itself off from the external communion of the Church Catholick; nor will it be safe for any man to commit the conduct of his soul to such a church." More to the same purport your correspondent will find at page 251 of the "True Nature of a Gospel Church," 4to. 1689.

After having thus shewn what the peculiar sentiments of the original Congregationalists were, and the distinction and difference between them and Presbyterians on the one side, and Independents and Brownists on the other, nothing is left to me but to avow myself an humble follower of these "masters in Israel" as they followed Christ. THEOLOGUS.

A SECOND LEAF OUT OF MY SCRAP BOOK.

OF BOOKS.

SOME of your bookish readers, in all probability, Gentlemen, were reminded by poor Jonathan's Sigh, in your last number, of the following quaint and curious remarks upon books by one of our old writers. But as I feel persuaded, that they will be new to many persons, and afford them consider-

able amusement, I shall transcribe them. "It is a vanity to perswade the world, one hath much learning by getting a great library. As soon shall I believe every one is valiant, that hath a well-furnished armory. I guess good house-keeping by the smoking, not the number of the tunnels, as knowing, that many of them (built merely for uniformity,) are without chimnies, and more without fires. Once a dunce, void of learning, but full of books, flouted a library-less scholar with these words, *Salve, doctor, sine libris*, (Hail, doctor, destitute of books :) but the next day the scholar coming into the jeerer's study crowded with books, *Salvete libri*, (saith he,) *sine doctore*, (Hail, books, without a learner.) Some books are only cursorily to be tasted of: namely, first, *voluminous books*, the task of a man's life to read them over; secondly, *auxiliary books*, only to be repaired to on occasions; thirdly, such as are mere pieces of formality, so that, if you look on them, you look through them; and he that peeps through the easement of the index, sees as much as if he were in the house. But the laziness of those cannot be excused, who perfunctorily pass over authors of consequence, and onely trade in their tables and contents. These, like city-cheaters, having gotten the names of all country gentlemen, make silly people believe they have long lived in those places where they never were, and flourish with skill in those authors they have never studied. Proportion an hour's meditation, to an hour's reading of a staple author. This makes a man master of his learning, and dispirits the book into the scholar. The King of Sweden never filed his men above six deep in one company, because he would not have them lie in useless clusters in his army; but so that every particular souldier might be drawn

out into service. Books that stand thinne on the shelves, yet so as the owner of them can bring forth every one of them into use, are better than far greater libraries."

I have generally observed, that those who have had the fewest books, have made the best use of them: and that some of our greatest scholars have had to struggle at once with pinching poverty, and the dearth of books. Jortin says of Erasmus, when he got any money, he would first buy books, and then clothes. I have seen ostentatious men recommend books they had never read, and ignorant rich men buy books they could not read. An elegant library is deemed as essential to a rich man's house, as a fine coat to his person, though the one may become him as little as the other. I remember once seeing an illiterate vulgar tradesman, of the very lowest rank, as void of taste as he was full of vanity, and as barren of knowledge as he was abundant in riches, bidding high prices at a sale for paintings, and other choice works of art, and outbidding all the scholars for learned and classic books, the names of which he probably had never before heard of, and would never after pronounce. Yet even this vanity is not wholly unproductive of good. I have enjoyed the use of many a learned and expensive work, which I might never otherwise have seen, out of libraries which were seldom disturbed by the presence of the proprietor;—and once saw a most choice and valuable collection in the mansion of a nobleman, whose ambition was rather to understand dogs and horses, than to study men, and who was satisfied to have a librarian that could tell him any thing he might ever want to know about books. Thus often rich men buy books, and poor men use them. And it would be some service to such hungry devourers of literary food, as your Jonathan Bookworm,

Jun. if those of their rich neighbours who possess libraries, would grant them free access. I drop this hint to your readers, as pointing out an economical plan of *enriching poor ministers, and relieving their sighs.*

Your's, &c.

BUSY BEE.

REPLY TO QUERY ON ORDINATIONS.

To the Editors.

GENTLEMEN,—At present, not for want of inclination however, I am not a constant reader of your Magazine; but I have just met with several numbers at a friend's house, and beg leave to make an observation or two on a question which you have inserted in the one for the present month (June). The query I refer to is the 2d on Ordinations; having, no doubt whatever, but it has reference to the ordination of Mr. Greatbach, which was noticed in your Magazine for March—"Without the knowledge or concurrence of the church over which he has the pastoral care, and at a considerable distance from them," might lead strangers to suppose that there had been some unfair dealing in the business; but from personal knowledge, I can assure you this was not the case. Mr. G. had not an opportunity before the service took place of informing his people that he intended availing himself of the opportunity of being ordained at Orrell, with Mr. Holgate; but he availed himself of the first opportunity afterwards, and that harmony which has always existed in his church, was manifested on that occasion also. A few weeks afterwards, they publicly recognized him as their pastor, on which occasion it was publicly stated, that he had been ordained in another place. As no similar case may have occurred in this part of the kingdom, I would now submit the

second question, with your leave, in a form somewhat different, and which I conceive would make it more generally useful, viz.—Is it consistent *with the New Testament*, to ordain a person to the Christian Ministry, as a pastor, at any place, but among his own people?

Your's, most respectfully,

PRIMITIVE.

A COUNTRY NON-CON'S VISIT TO THE METROPOLIS.

(To the Editors.)

GENTLEMEN,—Several years ago, I was much amused with some letters which appeared in your Magazine, dated from *Purilan Farm*, and have wondered that Old Non-Con has never been heard of since. One principal cause of my interest in his letters, was the similarity I traced between his description of the habits of his family, and those in which I was myself brought up—habits, I fear, but too generally counted *old-fashioned* and *obsolete* by our new-fangled religionists. But I would not detain you from the object of my letter, which was less to speak of myself than of a subject much more important. I reside at a distance from the metropolis, and seldom visit it; and when I do, it generally issues in a growing disapprobation of the manners of the people, and especially of the religious people. I have more reasons than I can here state for my fears, that the habits of professors in London are rapidly diverging from a sound and scriptural standard. We, who are country recluses, and who have few opportunities of mixing with the metropolitans, form our opinion of the state of things from what we witness; and we who are acquainted with the history—the holy lives—the correct and conscientious deportment of the puritans and nonconformists cannot avoid drawing a compari-

son at times, not a little to the disparagement of our London Dissenters. I confess to you, that I have several times before been struck with the deterioration that has taken place; but on my last visit, which was something less than a year ago, it was more than ever obtruded upon my observation. In one family, I had scarcely exchanged our usual salutation, before I discovered a grievous change in the religious principles of my friend, who had for years belonged to one of the oldest and most respectable dissenting congregations in London. I heard with astonishment, that the doctrines of the good old school were scouted, and that a new light had sprung up in my friend's mind; that he had discovered the Gospel had never been preached in the old place of worship. I soon found he was so wrapt up in his new notions, that remonstrance and reasoning was as vain, as if they had been addressed to the post that stood at the corner of the street. I went to the house of a second, who was so enraged, because I ventured to doubt on some points of a certain Scottish minister's dogmas, and to refuse that extravagant admiration he expressed, that he absolutely flamed himself into wrath and bitterness, and parted from me with as much contempt of my taste, as I felt pity for his delusion. I passed from the house of my friend to a large and elegant chapel in the neighbourhood, where I heard one of these new and popular preachers, who are looked upon as the only true evangelists of the day. He was explaining Philip. ii. 12 and 13. "Work out your own salvation," &c. He said, the force of the apostle's injunction lay not on the words *Work out*; but on the word *for* at the beginning of the 13th verse, intending thereby to throw the duty of the Philippian into the back ground, and to make way for his dogmatism about God's

working, and our doing nothing. He even laboured to prove, that the apostle was satirizing when he said, *work out your own salvation*—by using the following ingenious gloss, “*Well, ye Philippians, now do it if you can.*” And the peculiarity of his tone and look, when he repeated the words *work out*, and added, but remember it is God that worketh in you, was evidently designed to make his hearers despise that, which to my apprehension, the apostle appeared to enjoin as a duty, and on which alone the whole force of the passage rests;—the latter verse, containing but the reason for the fear and trembling with which he enjoins them to work. I cannot express to you the disgust I felt, at the absurd and unqualified assertions, in which he declared, that the work of grace in believers was actually not only divine, but God himself—declaring, that the work and the workman were both one, just as the sun, he said, was both light and the cause of light. “The sun in the heavens,” said he, “is both the cause of the light in this chapel, and itself is the very light which passes through these windows, and by which we see.” You may easily imagine, I thought of the good old commentators, and their sound expositions, and was ready to cry out, Are these the descendants of our Owens, our Howes, our Henrys! I could bear no more, and turning upon my heel with a deep sigh, left the place. The liberty I had heard taken with Scripture, distressed my mind. I thought of the barbarous mangling of the apostle’s words, and shuddered. I was not in a humour to be much pleased with London, or any thing I might still find in it; yet, when I listened in another place, to the following appropriate and impressive description of the word of God, I was forcibly struck with the pleasing contrast:—it had the effect of convincing me, that

there was at least some antidote working against the poison of the times. The contrast struck me the more from what I had just heard. The preacher shall be nameless, as well as the place. His words, however, were nearly as follow: “What an awful opprobrium upon our nature is it, that we can listen to the divine words, without feeling their force; that we can admit their authority without instantly and cheerfully rendering the required obedience! Were the question proposed to us before the fact were made visible—Can any man separate the doing from the hearing? we should say, It is utterly impossible. We should view every man to whom the word of God comes, as so seized by its dignity, its importance, its authority, as to be bound by a kind of moral necessity to keep it. But yet, when we look into the world, or into the church, how much otherwise is the fact! Many are like men beholding their faces in a glass—they go their way, and forget what manner of men they are: yet, it is certain, that neither the hearing nor the believing of the word of God, separated from the doing, can save us: Let the mind of each hearer distinctly apprehend this fact—that the voice which utters these words now, so little regarded by many, is that voice which bids the thunders roll, and the lightnings flash destruction—that voice which raises up the stormy billows, which shakes the solid ground, which bids the pestilence and famine flee to their work of destruction on the wings of the wind—that voice which once gave liberty to the waters of the great deep to overleap their appointed boundary, which now allots to the hand of death his appointed victims, and bids him, one after another, cut down the cumberers of the ground, and that voice, which one day will call forth all that sleep in the dust of death, to hear their final sen-

tence of joy or of woe. Yet how is the authority of the word of God disregarded! How little of that kind of deference is paid to it, which ought to be felt for an earthly superior, and much more for Him who is infinitely above us, and whose word possesses an authority, an awfulness, and a majesty far surpassing the apprehension even of the most sensitive and pious! Let me urge upon every conscience the authority of the word of God—let me prostrate before it all the pride of human reasonings, and all the quibblings of human unbelief; and let me set before every one present, the naked and unveiled authority of this sacred word. Let it not be looked upon in the semblance of human language or thought, the feeble medium of human diction, and of human feeling—let not its dictates be confounded with the words of man's wisdom—let not this sacred volume be identified with, or be lost among the number of human compositions—let it not be assimilated to any of the productions of earth, or classed in your esteem with any of the venerable productions of the wise and good. But let it stand forth distinguished, as it really is, by a character altogether singular and divine. In your imagination, let it appear robed with all the perfections of divinity—let it be classed with the other wonderful perfections of the same great and glorious Author—let it be numbered with, or set above all the great things of God in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath—clothe it with the lustre of the sun—the beauty of the stars—the profundity of the ocean—the fruitfulness of the earth—the fearfulness of the thunder, and the loftiness of the sky—and when all the creatures of God are found insufficient in their sublimest features, to supply an illustration of the real excellence and glory of his word—let us receive it as a mirror of his divine mind, and that

glass in which we behold the glory of the Lord." Such was the discourse, a part of which I heard. But notwithstanding all the pleasing evidences of much genuine religion in London, which I am ready to acknowledge, I could easily go on, Gentlemen, to tell you of other facts illustrative of the decay of primitive piety—such, for instance, as the frequency with which I have seen the Scottish Novels, especially the later ones, which are of a far worse character than those which first appeared, in the families of pious people, and in the hands of their young friends, to the neglect of good and useful books; the frequenting places of amusement, &c.; but I must forbear for the present, and remain,

Your's, &c.

MARK FAITHFUL.

A HINT ON EARLY MISSIONS.

(To the Editors.)

GENTLEMEN,—I have often heard it asserted in public meetings convened on Missionary occasions, that, until the present age, no efforts were ever thought of by the Protestant Churches, for the purpose of spreading the Gospel among unenlightened nations. Though I readily acknowledge, that no efforts comparable in extent to those now making, by the churches of England, are upon record, yet it ought not to be forgotten, that something was done in former times in this great cause. Cromwell ordered collections to be made in all the churches of England, in aid of missions among the American Indians. Large contributions were made about the same time for the promotion of Christianity in Wales,—and considerable efforts have been made at various times by the Protestant Churches in the north of Europe, for the spread of the Gospel among the heathens. I should be happy to see in your pages a historic sketch of Missionary exertions in former ages.

V. D. M.

POETRY.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

PEACEFUL in yon hallowed bound,
Near the pathway sleeping,
Low beneath that grassy mound,
Lies the friend I'm weeping;
Honour sees him fall unmoved,
Fame withholds her noisy breath,
But I knew him, and I loved,
I will mourn his death.

Oft together have we strayed,
When the day was closing,
Pleased to see in evening shade,
All things round reposing;
Oft with mutual delight,
Have we hailed our fav'rite star,
Followed by the queen of night,
Beaming from afar.

He possessed an eye and heart,
Formed to taste the pleasure.
Nature's lovely scenes impart,
In its highest measure.
But a long and dreamless night,
Shrouds him in sepulchral gloom,
'Mid the scenes once his delight,
He has found a tomb.

I had hop'd he'd share with me
Long life's toil and danger;
But his Lord has set him free,
Has recalled the stranger.
Soon his mortal course was run,
Soon his day of life was o'er,
Transient as the wintry sun
On the morning flower.

Oft I'll seek his lowly bed,
And prepare to meet him,
Hoping as the spot I tread,
Soon in heaven to greet him.
Peaceful in yon hallowed bound,
Near the rustic path asleep,
Low beneath that grassy mound
Lies the friend I weep.

G.

THE TRANSGRESSOR'S PLEA.

OH Thou, to whom all hearts are known,
Before thy sorrows they declare,
Behold a worm approach thy throne,
And pour his supplications there.

Hast thou not said, Almighty Lord,
To all transgressors, "Turn and live!"
"And plenteous grace, in free reward,
"To every contrite soul I give."

Oh wondrous grace! Oh! love unknown,
Oh, rich redemption for the lost!
The day of vengeance overflown;
A haven for the tempest-tost.

But ah! my heart is guilty still,
And sense and sin, my powers defile,
I deeply mourn a wayward will,
And thoughts and passions dark and vile.

But see, from Calvary's sacred mount,
A crimson stream of mercy roll:
There would I go, and at the fount
Open for sin, would wash my soul.

And thus renew'd, and cleans'd, and pure,
My spirit shall acceptance find,
And "grace on grace" at last secure
Immortal glory to my mind.

THE TEAR.

If Pity cause the tear to flow,
At scenes of wretchedness and woe,
Restrain it not, it is sincere,
The fruit of feeling is a tear.

When death the dearest tie shall rend,
And take that rarest boon—a friend—
Affection's tribute should appear,
Affection's tribute is—a tear.

If those we loved and wished to win,
Still wander in the paths of sin,
For those deceived, and still so dear,
The eye of faith must shed a tear.

And after death, when woe shall cease,
And all are met in joy and peace,
Then endless happiness shall cheer,
And God will wipe away thy tear.

M. C. S.

CARPE DIEM.

GATHER your rose buds while you may,
Old Time is still a flying;
And that same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,
The higher he is getting;
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer comes the setting.

Playford's Introduction to Music.

REVIEW OF BOOKS.

The Precepts of Jesus the Guide to Peace and Happiness, extracted from the Books of the New Testament, ascribed to the Four Evangelists. To which are added, the First and Second Appeal to the Christian Public, in Reply to the Observations of Dr. Marshman, of Serampore. By Rammohun Roy.—8vo. 9s. Calcutta, printed: London, reprinted. Hunter, 1823.

A Defence of the Deity and Atonement of Jesus Christ, in Reply to Rammohun Roy of Calcutta. By Dr. Marshman, of Serampore. 8vo. 7s.—London: Black and Co. 1822.

BEFORE we enter on the proper subject of this article, we must have a short explanation with Rammohun Roy's London editor, Dr. Thomas Rees. Dr. Marshman, in his Defence, had presumed to speak of "the Socinians of England," and for this heinous offence, he receives the following castigation.

"It is with regret we observe that Dr. Marshman, who in general writes like a scholar and a gentleman, has, in the passage above cited, condescended to imitate the conduct of some low bigots on this side of the water, in designating the Unitarians by the term 'Socinians,' which, he must know, is not correctly descriptive of their opinions, and is generally employed as an epithet of reproach."

Whether Dr. Thomas Rees be a scholar or not, we do not profess to know, inasmuch as we have no acquaintance with him or his works, beyond the Preface to the present volume, excepting that we have somewhere seen his name with the prefix which we have therefore adopted. We have, however, yet to learn that it is gentlemanly to call names, or discreet to betray ill-temper and irritation, especially when the provocation is all on the angry side.

CONG. MAG. No. 79.

Why will the Socinians persist in calling themselves by a term which is not only indiscriminative, but which assumes the very point in debate? If their claim were allowed for a few years, we should have them arguing in their own favour from this concession, with the same bad faith that has occasionally distinguished their miserable cavillings about the epithet Trinitarian. Let them frame some unexceptionable title, such, for instance, as Humanitarian, which may distinguish them at once from Arians and the Orthodox, and we will readily avail ourselves of it; in the mean time, we shall, without any regard to the undignified petulance of Dr. Thomas Rees, feel ourselves quite at liberty to designate them by what they are pleased to consider as "a term of reproach." If Dr. Thomas Rees be vulnerable—a point on which we have some doubts—by the argument *ad verendum*, we could put together a list of the "low bigots" who have awakened his wrath, that would make him ashamed of this splenetic paragraph. There is another passage on which we had meant to make a slight comment, but it is not worth while, and we shall quit the Doctor for the Bramin.

Rammohun Roy is a native of Bengal, and at this time about forty-five years of age. His education appears to have embraced the most extensive circle of Hindoo scholarship, and by the deaths of his father and brothers he became possessed, when about five-and-twenty, of the whole of the family property. Thus furnished both with science and wealth, he began a career of investigation, the results of which were, from time to time, communicated to the public, and which ultimately terminated in a conviction of the errors of pa-

3 A

ganism, and a partial acquiescence in the Christian faith. Having been compelled, through the exasperated enmity of those whom he had offended by the freedom of his remarks, to leave the dwelling-place of his ancestry, and to fix his residence at Calcutta, he obtained a high office in the revenue department, and applied himself with great diligence and success to the study of English, Hebrew, and the classical languages. Of the knowledge thus acquired, he availed himself to publish various works illustrative of the different systems of religious belief which were prevailing around him; and the last of these, as well as the only one with which we have any acquaintance, now lies before us. Having become a Christian after the fashion of Arianism, he published the first of the three treatises which make up the volume in our hand, containing the "moral precepts" delivered by our Saviour, without the addition of those doctrinal instructions which lie at the foundation of faith, and give its peculiar character and consistency to the morality of the New Testament.

"Historical," he observes, "and some other passages, are liable to the doubts and disputes of freethinkers and antichristians, especially miraculous relations, which are much less wonderful than the fabricated tales handed down to the natives of Asia, and consequently would be apt at best to carry little weight with them. On the contrary, moral doctrines, tending evidently to the maintenance of the peace and harmony of mankind at large, are beyond the reach of metaphysical perversion, and intelligible alike to the learned and to the unlearned."

A specimen is afterwards given of the "fabricated tales" of Asia, which are thus represented by implication as more weighty and interesting than the "miraculous relations" of the Gospel.

"Ugisti is famed for having swallowed the ocean, when it had given him offence, and having restored it by urinary evacu-

ation: at his command, also, the Vindhya range of mountains prostrated itself, and so remains."

Concerning the decency and good taste of thus bringing into juxtaposition and parallel, the miracles of Jesus and the filthy and absurd legends of the Hindoo mythology, we shall say nothing. It shall suffice just to point out the admirable consistency of this disciple—after the "Unitarian" school—of the Lord of life and glory. He avows his belief in Christianity, and, of course, his entire conviction of the veracity and faithfulness of those who have given us the documents which contain the records of our faith. Now the evidence on which the authoritative character of the "Precepts" rests, is precisely the same with that on which the credibility of the miracles is grounded, and it is therefore palpably unreasonable to reject the one while receiving the other. If we are told that the precepts are in themselves binding, and on that account demand obedience, then we say that their reception is entirely independent of Christianity; and derives its sanction from a different law. Every one who receives the moral injunctions of the Redeemer as pertaining to a system of divine communication, takes them under the sanction of those very miracles which are here treated in so supercilious a manner. But there is another consideration which either never suggested itself to Rammohun Roy, or if, at any time, it crossed his mind, gave way before paramount feelings. Jesus Christ, delivering his instructions to mankind, felt it necessary to enforce them by miraculous illustrations of his divine mission—we say nothing at present of his divine character, though we think his miracles decisive of that—and they who after his decease communicated his life and sayings to the world, put those

miracles on record, and sent forth the narrative of all, as the most effectual way of commanding attention, and securing the assent of those to whom it was addressed. But now comes the Bramin Rammohun Roy, and tells us, virtually at least, that the Evangelists were mistaken; that they adopted the worst possible method of soliciting a favourable audience; that the framers of monstrous fables would beat them at their own weapons; and that the diuretic feats of Ugisti are much better things than the expulsion of demons and the restoration of the dead. Nay, he goes farther still, for he arraigns the wisdom and authority of the great Teacher, whom he professes to revere, since he presumes to condemn the mode of instruction that his Master deliberately adopted, and sets at nought the grand coherence of the system which He lived and died, and rose again, to establish and confirm.

"Hindustan is a country, of which nearly three-fifths of the inhabitants are Hindoos, and two-fifths Moosulmans. Although the professors of neither of these religions are possessed of such accomplishments as are enjoyed by Europeans in general, yet the latter portion are well known to be firmly devoted to a belief in one God, which has been instilled into their minds from their infancy. The former (I mean the Hindoos) are, with a few exceptions, immersed in gross idolatry, and in belief of the most extravagant description respecting futurity, antiquity, and the miracles of their deities and saints, as handed down to them and recorded in their ancient books. Weighing these circumstances, and anxious, from his long experience of religious controversy with natives, to avoid farther disputation with them, the Compiler selected those precepts of Jesus, the obedience to which he believed most peculiarly required of a Christian, and such as could by no means tend, in doctrine, to excite the religious horror of Mohammedans, or the scoffs of Hindoos. What benefit or peace of mind can we bestow upon a Moosulman, who is an entire stranger to the Christian world, by communicating to him, without preparatory instruction, all the peculiar dogmas of Christianity;

such as those contained in *ver. 1st, chap. 1st, of St. John*, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God?" Would they not find themselves at a loss to reconcile this dogma to their unprepared understandings, viz. A is B, and A is also with B?"

In other words, since the conversion of the Moslem and the Hindoos is a task of exceeding difficulty, let us try whether we cannot subdue their prejudices and effect their illumination, by putting aside nearly all that is distinguishing in Christian principle, and presenting to them nothing but the morality of the Scriptures, without any other appeal to motives than the invariably unsuccessful recommendation of virtue on the score of its intrinsic loveliness, and its connexion with the favour of God. If Rammohun Roy has so learned human nature as to dream of its moral renovation without a divine operation on the heart—if he have so estimated the state of man's affections, and the character of God, as not to be able to discern the deep alienation of the first, and the unmitigable claims of the latter—if he have cherished the romantic delusion that the world is to become again the temple of the Lord by the mere force of moral aphorisms,—we can only say that he is as complete a fanatic as any of the men of high orthodoxy can possibly be in his view, and that he has read the Scriptures either with the veil upon his heart, or through the medium of a preconceived hypothesis. In fact, we have a strong misgiving, that this book is not to be considered simply as representing the unaided processes of the Bramin's mind. There is, throughout, such a family resemblance to the common places that we are in the constant habit of, hearing from certain quarters, in our own country, as to awaken a stirring suspicion of previous schooling. A dark spirit is at

work in yonder region ; it has betrayed itself most awfully in one lamentable instance, and its influence is, we fear, but too evident in the short-sighted speculations of Rammohun Roy. We have received intimations, too definite and too well supported by circumstances to admit of hesitation in belief, but which we do not feel ourselves at liberty to refer to in any other way than by general allusion.

Soon after Rammohun Roy's work made its appearance, it was made the subject of some strictures in the periodical publication intitled the "Friend of India." In reply to these, Rammohun Roy published, under the signature of a "Friend to Truth," an "Appeal to the Christian Public in defence of the Precepts of Jesus." This was answered by Dr. Marshman, and a rejoinder was published by his opponent. The controversy, as far as appears by these volumes, closed with "Remarks" by Dr. M.

We are sorry to use harsh language in application to the production of an amiable man ; but there is such a striking character of ignorance and perverseness in many of the comments before us, that it is impossible to refrain from advertng to it. The following passage may serve as a partial exemplification of the very convenient style in which this Hindoo reformer encounters the grand doctrines of Christianity.

"Another argument which has great weight with that sect is, that unless Jesus is God and man, he cannot be considered as qualified to perform the office of mediation between God and man ; because it is only by this compound character that he intercedes for guilty creatures with their offended God. This mode of reasoning is most evidently opposed to common sense, as well as to the Scriptures ; though their zeal in support of the Trinity has not permitted them to see it. I say, opposed to common sense ; because we observe, that when any one feels angry with, and inclined to punish, one of a herd of cattle

which may have trespassed on his grounds, or when a rider wishes to chastise his horse on account of its viciousness, it is his friend or neighbour generally who intercedes in its behalf, and is successful in procuring mercy to the offending animal, in his simple nature, without assuming in addition that of the creature in whose behalf he intercedes. I say, opposed to scripture ; because we find in the sacred writings, that Abraham, Moses, and other Prophets, stood mediators and interceded successfully in behalf of an offending people with their offended God ; but none of them possessed the double nature of God and man."—pp. 259, 260.

"I find several others performing the office of mediator and intercessor in common with Jesus, as I noticed before ; and indeed this seems to have been an office common to all Prophets : but none of them is supposed to have been clothed with Godhead and manhood in union."—p. 261.

"I regret very much that a sect generally so enlightened should on the one hand have supposed the divine and human natures to be so diametrically opposed to each other, that it is morally impossible for God even to accept intercession from a mere human being in behalf of the human race ; and on the other hand should have advanced, that the Deity joined to his own nature that of man, and was made flesh, possessing all the members and exercising all the functions of man—propositions which are morally inconsistent with each other."—pp. 261, 262.

Really, the learned Bramin, before he allowed himself to write all this nonsense, should have taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the doctrines really held by "that sect." In all this parade of fact and argument, there is not a syllable that has the slightest bearing on the real subject. Who ever maintained that the union of the divine and human natures was necessary for the effectual employment of simple intercession ? What connexion is there between the interference of "a neighbour," to save a vicious horse from punishment, or the supplicating mediation of Abraham, Moses, and the Prophets, in behalf of an "offending people," and the great doc-

trines of the intercession of Christ, as founded on his sacrifice and substitution? If the real state of the question were known, the learned Bramin indulged himself in a little Oriental licence when he assumed the name of a "Friend to Truth;" if it were not, we regret that he should have been so forward to expose his ignorance.

It may not be amiss to give another specimen of the triumphant way in which this *protégé* of the English Socinians, beats his antagonists out of their strong holds.

"After a slight attention to the terms Lord and God being often applied to men in the Sacred Writings, can any weight be allowed to the exclamation of the astonished disciple, John, chap. xx. ver. 28, "My Lord and my God;" especially as the apostle who relates the circumstance, within a few verses, concludes by saying, ver. 31, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;" but nowhere desires the readers of his Gospel to believe that Jesus is God? Does not common sense point out the inferiority and subordination of a Being though called God, to one who is at the same time declared to be his God, his Father, his Sanctifier, and his Promoter to the state of exaltation?"

The passage, John, chap. i. ver. 1, "The Word was God, and the Word was with God," which contains the term God twice, may, according to such use of the term, be interpreted without involving inconsistency with itself, or the contradiction which it apparently implies with another most decisive passage in Deut. chap. xxxii. ver. 39, where Moses representeth God declaring, that with him there is no God: "See now that I, even I am he; and there is no God with me;" if it should be understood to signify in both instances the Supreme Deity. Should we follow, on the other hand, the interpretation adopted by Trinitarian Christians, namely, that the Godhead, though it is one, yet consists of three persons, and consequently one substance of the Godhead might abide with the other, both being equally God; we should, in that case, be forced to view the Godhead in the same light as we consider mankind and other genera, for no doubt can exist of the unity of mankind:—the plurality of men consists in their persons; and therefore we may safely, under the same plea, support the unity of man, notwithstanding the plurality of persons in-

cluded under the term mankind."—pp. 170, 171, 172.

If Rammohun Roy had condescended to shew where the contradiction really lies, between the essential character of the Redeemer as God, and his official character as the Son of God, we might have derived some illumination from his labours. As the matter now rests, we can only stand in admiration at his idle parade of words, and his intrepid assertion, that John "nowhere desires the readers of his Gospel to believe that Jesus is God," when in the very next paragraph occurs a passage, in which, in the teeth of the singularly absurd attempt to explain it away, that apostle distinctly affirms the divinity of his Lord. But the whole passage is an egregious specimen of that art of entangling and puzzling, in which the eastern sages are far greater proficient than in legitimate logic. We might exemplify this farther by citations from the "Inquiry into the Doctrine of the Atonement,"—about as finished a specimen of crude notions and systematic evasion, as any we are acquainted with; but we must turn to Dr. Marshman, and cite, as a general sample of his style and manner, the summary of his masterly investigation of the evidence afforded by Scripture to the cardinal doctrine of the atonement.

"We have now, on the plan suggested by our author himself, taken a general, though a cursory view of the evidence found in the Scriptures, that the death of Jesus on the cross is an atonement for the sins of men; and we have found this prefigured by sacrifice enjoined of God, and publicly approved by him while he had no delight in them, but had prepared a body for his Son. We find prophecies afterwards delivered relative to the future Redeemer, which predict the nation, the tribe, the family, and at length the place, the time, and manner of his birth, together with numerous circumstances respecting both his life and his death. The books which contain these predictions are the Sacred Writings, which nourish

the faith and the piety of all in this period who truly worship God. If then Jesus did not offer himself a sacrifice for our sins, a double deception was practised on his worshippers by the God of truth: the sacrifices were an illusion, and the predictions falsehood, and all the real religion on earth, prior to Christ's coming, was the offspring of deceit. The Scriptures, however, go on to relate, that at length Jesus Christ is born of the nation, the tribe, the family, at the time and place, and in the manner predicted. He is pointed out as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. He himself refers to the prophecies, as mentioning his vicarious death; and after his resurrection, commands his disciples to proclaim his death among all nations as the atonement for sin. This they do every where, interweaving it into all their epistles intended to guide Christians in future ages;—and one, the most venerable of them, represents it as the idea universally prevalent among the blessed in heaven. If then Jesus Christ did not make a real atonement for sin, all the religion of the patriarchs and prophets, of the apostles and primitive saints, and even of the blessed in heaven, is built on deception—the Old and the New Testament are full of falsehood,—and there has never been any true revelation given among men.”—pp. 140, 141, 142.

Our previous observations and extracts will have shewn that in answering the involved, imperfect, and desultory argumentation of Rammohun Roy, Dr. Marshman had a task of some difficulty, arising from the very defects of his opponent's method. It is but justice to say, that he has acquitted himself with great ability, and that his volume contains a complete and well-written refutation of the Appeals. We shall insert one more extract from the Doctor's tracts, as a specimen of the successful way in which he fixes and exposes the extravagations of the Hindoo Unitarian.

“To our author's criticism on Isaiah vii. 14, ‘Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,’ &c. compared with chap. ix. 6, ‘For unto us a child is born,’ &c., we have already replied by shewing him, that a slight attention to the chronology of the Scriptures would have saved him this labour, by convincing him that Hezekiah must at that moment have been six if not seven years old, and

that it is not the way of Him who rests his claim to Godhead on his declaring things to come, to foretel things already past, like Valmikee in the Ramayana. His mode of shewing, however, that ‘the illustrious son of Ahaz’ was not the only king of the select nation of God who was honoured with such names as—‘Emmanuel, God with us,’ and with such epithets as—‘Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace’—deserves to be noticed. What instances does he bring that these names, peculiar to God, were applied to certain kings in Israel? Two. Gen. xxxii. 28, ‘Thy name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel, God's Prince, (more properly a Prince with God) for as a Prince hast thou power with men and with God, and hast prevailed.’ And Psalm lxxxix. 18, ‘For Jehovah is our defence, and THU HOLY ONE of Israel our king.’ But who among the Israelitish kings was the Holy One of Israel? Is not the Holy One of Israel Jehovah himself? If not, what does Isaiah mean in chap. xlv. 3, ‘I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.’ The proof, then, that ‘Emmanuel, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace,’ are applied to certain ‘kings of this select nation’ is, that Jacob was called ‘Israel,’ which is no name of God, and that Jehovah and the future Messiah are both styled the Holy One of Israel!”

An Answer to the Abbé Dubois; in which the various wrong Principles, Misrepresentations, and Contradictions contained in his Work, intitled “Letters on the State of Christianity in India,” are pointed out; and the Evangelization of India, is, both on sound Principle and by solid Fact, demonstrated to be practicable. By Henry Townley, Missionary to Bengal. Westley. 4s. 6d.

THAT any man should unblushingly declare, in the face of the World, that he believes Christianity to be the only true and Divine religion;—the religion prepared by the Creator with infinite wisdom and power, and commended to mankind, as worthy of all acceptance;—and yet proceed to impugn the ability of that religion, to bless and save one considerable section of

the human race, and even profess his belief that it never can, by any possibility, be made to prevail over the superstitions and vices of that people, is not to be explained by a reference to the eccentricities of the human intellect, or the errors and misconceptions of human judgment. The perversion that could give rise to such an inconsistency, in a man of education, experience, and knowledge, must originate rather in the heart than in the understanding. There must be a high degree of self-imposition practised before so much light can be shut out, and so much prejudice admitted; so many truths overlooked, and so many contradictions approved, in order to arrive at the desirable conclusion. We could readily have overlooked the Abbé's aberration, if he had merely expressed his disapprobation of Protestant Missions, but evinced some sympathy with the principles or design of the Author of Christianity. If he had assumed the sufficiency of Divine agency, to accomplish even the difficult work of Hindoo conversion, in God's own time, and confessed that the Gospel was the power of God, but had proceeded to condemn the exertion of Protestant teachers, or to question the accuracy of Protestant translations, and to arrogate the sole prescriptive right of evangelizing the East to the Roman Church; this would have been perfectly in character, would have excited no surprize, and would have been deservedly classed with the general tenets and proceedings of his Church;—but when he attempts to shew, that all efforts to convert the Hindoos *must* be vain!—that their evangelization is an IMPOSSIBILITY!—that all Missionaries together have actually done nothing!—that all that has been said, and published, upon the progress of the Gospel in the East, is absolutely FALSE!—that all Christian teachers ought to

abandon India to its fate!—that the inhabitants are under a sentence of REPROBATION!—and more to the same purport; we are then compelled to ask,—Who is the Abbé Dubois, that he should claim credence to such startling, such monstrous propositions? What knows he, that we know not; and where are the facts, upon the strength of which he has arrived at such sweeping and presumptuous conclusions?—He has lived many years in India, in the character of a Popish Missionary; he has endeavoured, he avers, by conforming, as much as possible, to the manners, habits, and principles of the Natives, to win them to Christianity;—*he became almost a Brahmin!*—and he has gained no sound convert; and now he returns to England, at the close of life, ashamed of his discomfiture, and makes a feeble attempt to convince the world, that all Missionary efforts *must* be as abortive as his own; and by lengthened arguments, as void of force as they are of candour and truth, he attempts to cut the sinews of all exertion, and dry up the streams of Christian benevolence at their source. His argument is analogous to that of some unsuccessful adventurer, who should go out on a voyage of discovery in a balloon, and because his own project had failed, and he narrowly escaped being dashed in pieces, should affirm, that no other, though conducted in a different element, and by a different route, could be successful. There is no room to wonder at the Abbé's failure; it might have been predicted by those who make no pretensions to prophetic foresight. The inhabitants of India can never be converted to Popery, for two very substantial reasons:—they are too acute and argumentative, and Popery can employ no measure of coercion and of terror there. But our business is, at present, rather with

Mr. Townley, than with the Abbé, and we must proceed to make our readers acquainted with the very able and seasonable reply, which the Abbé's letters have drawn forth. In this respect, like the persecution in the West, this attack upon East-India Missions, has done great good; and we take them both as indications of growing success. But, for the Abbé's work, the world would not have seen this able and comprehensive summary of facts;—this calm and manly refutation;—not of the Abbé's calumnies merely, but of a hundred other superficial attacks, which the Missionary cause has of late sustained.

The Abbé begins, by stating two questions:—Is there a possibility of making real converts to Christianity among the natives of India?—Are the means employed for that purpose, and, above all, the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the idioms of the country, likely to conduce to this desirable object?—To both these questions he gives a decided negative. Now it is very obvious, at the outset, that his second question was involved in the first. Of course, if there is no possibility of conversion *at all*, that must extend to the Scriptures, as well as all other means; so that he might have contented himself with narrowing his ground still more, without infringing upon the strength and completeness of his argument. The first question answered in the negative, all others are answered: but then it is one thing to give a categorical reply, another to sustain that reply by adequate reasoning and proof. The failure of the Abbé, in this point, is very instructive, in more respects than one. It lets us into a double explanation of the failure of his own Mission. If he employed no better logic in his reasonings with the *Oriental*s, than he has done in his letters, he must have been as

much ashamed in the presence of his auditors, as he is now before the Christian public; and if he made as little account of Divine influence in his Mission, as he has done in his letters, it was but a just visitation of Almighty God, that the former, as well as the latter, should prove utterly abortive. His first question, to which he gives a negative,—*Is it possible to make real converts to Christianity among the natives of India?* is reducible, by a very simple analysis, which Mr. Townley has skilfully applied, either to dishonourable quibbling, or to barefaced blasphemy. The *possibility* denied, may be referred to two kinds of agency. If the Abbé restricts it to human agency, then it is idle quibbling, in reference to Protestants; for where is the Missionary that expects this conversion, or any conversion, by human agency? We will venture to say, there is not a Protestant Missionary, in all the peninsula of India, that would not give the same reply to this question, which the Abbé has himself given—if the question be explained of human *possibility*. And if we turn to the other branch of the alternative, it looks even with a worse aspect towards the unfortunate Abbé.—*There is no possibility of sound converts being made to Christianity from among the natives of India, even by Divine agency!!!* Will the Abbé, or any of his abettors, face this proposition, and adopt it? And it is the only interpretation relevant to the present controversy;—the only principle touching the main-spring of Missions;—the only one reaching to the strong hold which the Missionaries possess, and by which they triumphantly vindicate those efforts, which are alike opposed by the blinded prejudice of such men as the Abbé, and by the sordid interest of worldly calculators. The Abbé's letters are occupied, in efforts to sustain his replies to these

two leading questions; and Mr. Townley follows him through his objection with much patience. One of the most interesting parts of Mr. T.'s work, is that which meets the assertion of the Abbé, —that all the labours of the Missionaries had terminated in nothing. He gives an admirable summary of what has been effected by modern efforts in India, and gladly would we enrich our pages with the whole of this statement, were it practicable. But we must content ourselves with a mere specimen.

“ In the province of Bengal, missionaries, connected with different Protestant societies, have embarked in the missionary cause. I will commence with those of the Baptist denomination, as having taken the lead; and, as proposed, first notice their labours referring more immediately to Europeans.

“ In Calcutta, the Baptist missionaries have erected two substantial chapels for the accommodation of the British residents. The worship of God is regularly conducted in English at these chapels on the Sabbath days, and at other convenient seasons in the week, and they have been of use in opening the eyes of many nominal European Christians to the impropriety of calling Christ, Lord! without doing the things which he has commanded.

“ At Howrah, (on the side of the river opposite to Calcutta) the Baptist missionaries conduct European worship in a chapel, which they have been the means of building.

“ At Serampore, the missionaries conduct the worship of Europeans in the church belonging to the colony, under the sanction of His Excellency the Danish Governor, and also in a large school-room connected with the mission establishment. They have also been successful preachers to the military at Fort William, Dumdum, Barrackpore, Berhampore, and other places. Many of this class have been reclaimed from vicious habits, and enabled, through their labours, to adorn their Christian profession by a blameless walk and conversation.

“ At Calcutta and Serampore, the missionaries of the Baptist denomination have schools for the children of the European gentry, which are seminaries of religion as well as of learning, where many have been induced to remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

“ In connection with the Baptist Mission at Calcutta, must also be distinctly

noticed the school denominated ‘the Benevolent Institution,’ in which some thousands of poor children, chiefly the descendants of those usually termed Portuguese Roman Catholics, have received the most important instruction, been rescued from the miseries of ignorance, and taught how to discharge their duties to God and man.

“ The ‘Friend of India,’ a periodical work;—Answers to Ram Mohunroy, the celebrated Brahmin, on the Socinian controversy;—and other publications, in English, from the pen of the Baptist missionaries, written for the benefit of Europeans, have contributed to the furtherance of the great cause in Bengal.

“ The fruit of these labours, as bearing upon the work among the Heathen, has been, that several Europeans, impressed with a deep sense of religion, have relinquished their original occupations, and embarked in direct missionary work among the Hindoos. Many have subscribed liberally of their substance for the furtherance of the great object, have advocated the cause of Christianity in private conversations with the Heathen, assisted in the distribution of the Scriptures and Tracts, and rolled away a great part of the stumbling-block, previously alluded to, by furnishing the most effectual of all arguments for the conversion of the Heathen—the example of a holy life.

“ We have now to advert to the labours of the Baptist missionaries, as carried on more directly among the Heathen. To the native inhabitants of India they have diligently proclaimed the tidings of salvation. They have built several bungalows, to serve as chapels for them, in Calcutta, Serampore, and other places. In these bungalows, as well as out of doors, the missionaries, and various native preachers, are continually occupied in explaining the Gospel to the Hindoos.

“ The question will doubtless now be put,—Have they succeeded in their efforts? Have they been instrumental in effecting the conversion of any of the Hindoos, especially of the Brahmins? I answer, as an eye-witness, that they have. I travelled for about a month with a converted Brahmin, who was induced to make a profession of Christianity by the preaching and conversation of another native, of inferior caste, who had been previously converted himself by the instrumentality of the Baptist missionaries.

“ In the month of November, 1821, this Brahmin, together with another converted Hindoo, an European, who in India had become a missionary, and myself, embarked in a covered boat for the purpose of ascending the river Hooghly, and

preaching the Gospel to the Heathen wherever we went. In the course of this excursion, I had a full opportunity of observing the conduct of these two Hindoo converts, and it was such as produced a strong impression on my mind that their faith in Christ was real, and their Christian profession sincere.

"After the period I have specified, the Brahmin above alluded to, lived for some months, in a small building contiguous to the house in which I resided. He came to me daily for the purpose of prosecuting his theological studies; and when I went out at sunset, or in the evening of the day, with a view of preaching to and conversing with the Heathen, he in general accompanied me, and took part in the services.

"Upon his becoming acquainted with my resolution to return to England, he expressed a strong wish to accompany me. Had Providence granted his desire, he would have been at this moment in England; and, whilst the Abbé is asserting, that the conversion of a Hindoo, especially of a Brahmin, cannot be effected, this Brahmin would have stepped forth, and presented himself in refutation of the statement.

"It pleased an inscrutable, yet, all-wise Providence, to disappoint the fond hopes entertained by many, that this interesting young man would prove a light to lighten many of his Gentile countrymen, and to bring them from the regions of moral and spiritual darkness, into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. He died a short time before I left Bengal; and when I remember his gift in prayer, his sweetness of temper in preaching, his general humble and engaging deportment, I feel a pleasing persuasion, that if I be found at last among the happy number of those admitted into the New Jerusalem, I shall meet this converted Brahmin there."—pp. 89—94.

"With regard to the number of Hindoo converts, resulting from the labours of the Baptist missionaries in Bengal, from what I have seen and heard at Calcutta, Serampore, Cutwa, and other parts of Bengal, they have amounted to several hundreds; and though tares are mingled with the wheat, yet, if I am to judge of the character of those whose walk and conversation I have not had the opportunity of knowing, by the demeanour of those with whom I have been familiar, a considerable proportion of them are, in the judgment of charity, to be deemed real converts to the Christian faith.

"At Serampore, even a NATIVE MISSIONARY SOCIETY has been formed, the committee of which is almost entirely composed of natives, about ten of whom are in the habit of devoting a part of their leisure time every week, to the inculca-

tion of the principles of the Gospel among their neighbours residing in Serampore, and the adjacent villages.

"This committee also publish a monthly work in the Bengalee language, containing miscellaneous information on points connected with the spread of the Gospel, and the edification of the native believers; they have also written tracts to explain and recommend the Christian faith to their unconverted countrymen.

"The native converts at Serampore, are in the habit of holding weekly meetings for prayer and exhortation, and sometimes special prayer meetings on particular occasions. When I was last at Serampore, it was about the period of the celebrated *Doorga Pooja*, at which time a series of wicked rites are performed, not fit to be mentioned, nor even thought of. One of the native converts, at this season of peculiarly abominable idolatry, spoke to a Christian brother, to the following effect:—"Let us meet together for prayer every one of the evenings devoted to the worship of the idol, and let us pray to God to put an end to this wicked practice, which pollutes our land. Let us go on praying, night after night, and year after year, till we have *prayed down* the *Doorga Pooja*. Let us *pray it down*." Ah! what a lesson does this read to many a prayerless professor of the Christian faith, dwelling in this enlightened land! who cares not whether Jehovah or Baal, God or Doorga, be the object worshipped by the millions of Hindostan."—pp. 94—96.

Mr. Townley then proceeds to give a succinct view of what has been done by the Baptist brethren in the translation of the scriptures; but as these facts are pretty generally known, we pass over them to other important details, connected with the refutation of the Abbé's calumnies. Mr. T. quotes from a recent publication, by the Serampore Missionaries, the statement, that there are ten or twelve Churches in this connection, in India, containing between five and six hundred members, out of which, scarcely more than twenty are natives of Europe. Mr. T.'s next statement relates to the Church Missionary Society; of which, he says,—

"As it respects Calcutta, this society has an important station in the midst of the teeming population of the native

town. Here preaching, catechising, printing, and all the departments of a Christian institution, for the enlightening and conversion of the Heathen, are coming into action. It is favourably situated for constant visits among the natives, and the superintendence of schools. At the date of the last advices, an Auxiliary Association was on the point of being formed, under the patronage of the Bishop of Calcutta.

"The Church Missionary Society has paid much attention to the instruction of Hindoo youth, numbering among the fruits of its exertions in North India, about fifty schools, and between two and three thousand scholars.

"The society, in its efforts to impart instruction to the female population, particularly in and near Calcutta, has been signally successful: and shortly before I left the country, I was gratified in learning, that its missionaries at Burdwan had just baptized two Hindoo young men, the first members of their native church in that district.

"At Benares, the society has under its care, in connexion with other departments of missionary labour, a School Establishment, founded by a native, Jay Narain, and secured in its endowment by his son, Kolly Shunker. The conduct of these natives is, of itself, a sufficient refutation of the notion, that the case of the Hindoos is hopeless. After urging the establishment, at Benares, of a printing press, Kolly Shunker adds these striking words:—

"I wish to reside some time in these parts, and to effect the increase of Christian knowledge among the people. I therefore beg you will pray for the enlightening of the human minds, which are naturally in darkness. Oh, I am sure, without it, no good can be expected in this or in the next world."—pp. 101, 102.

Mr. Townley takes a general survey of the efforts making for the evangelization of India, and, though it may be said that the magnitude of their efforts is no evidence of the measure of success; yet he shews, that enough has transpired already, to annul the Abbé's assertions, and to encourage the hopes and efforts of British Christians. He alludes, very properly, to the general impression made in the minds of the natives, in favour of Christianity;—to their growing willingness to read and inquire;—to the mitiga-

tion of prejudice, and, especially, to the increase of schools; as all supplying ample proof, that the case is not so desperate as this Catholic would represent. The statement which Mr. T. presents of the efforts and successes of the London Society, will be found in the following passage:—

"In Calcutta, the missionaries sent forth by this institution, have been instrumental in the erection of a capacious chapel for European worship. In connexion with this congregation, two Europeans, awakened to a due sense of religion, subsequently to their arrival in India, have devoted themselves to the work of instructing the Heathen in the principles of Christianity.—The change which took place in one of them was very remarkable, and strongly displayed the truth and power of the Gospel; so much so, that a native preacher, being asked one day, by some pagan Hindoos, 'What power is there in Jesus Christ, whom you talk so much about? What can he do, that our gods cannot do?'—replied, 'Some of you know what was the conduct of such an European (naming the person in question) in former days: he was the slave of his appetites and passions, and full of pride; he used to look upon us Hindoos as if we were so many dogs; and when he rode out in his chaise, would use his whip, and cut us with it on both sides of his carriage, as he rode along. Now look at the same individual; his conduct is pure and chaste, his demeanour affable and kind; hear him preaching the Gospel of salvation and peace to you; intreating you also to break off from your iniquities, and to give glory to the God of Heaven; see him full of love and humility, and ready to fall at your feet, if it would avail, to induce you to be reconciled to God. Which of your gods have ever produced such a holy change as this?'

"Two other members of this congregation devote the principal part of their leisure time to the furtherance of the great work; the one, in private circles among the Europeans; the other (being familiar with the dialects both of the Hindoos and of the Mahomedans), among the natives.

"Besides the labours of the missionaries of the London Society, in the above-mentioned chapel, they have also preached to Europeans in Hourah; to many of the military in Fort William; and, under the sanction of their Excellencies, first the British Governor, and afterwards the Dutch Governor of Chinsurah, have con-

ducted European worship in the church belonging to that colony.

"In connexion with the European congregation in Calcutta, an Auxiliary Society has been established, for the furtherance of the cause among the Heathen. It is supported principally by voluntary contributions from European residents in Calcutta, Chinsurah, and other parts of India, which amount annually to several hundred pounds. The Auxiliary Society has also established a printing office, which has issued above a hundred thousand tracts, in different languages.

"The London Society has likewise, in connexion with its mission in Bengal, a considerable number of native schools. Their missionaries have also great cause for gratitude to the British rulers in India; who, studying the happiness of the natives, and planting their authority in the hearts of the people, afford the missionaries of this society, living at Chinsurah, considerable assistance in the establishment of native schools. These schools are the means of imparting important literary knowledge, and, to a considerable extent, religious knowledge also, to between two and three thousand Hindoo children, some of whom are females.

"The importance of native schools is beginning now to disclose itself. It seemed to me, that more progress had been made in the school department, in the year immediately antecedent to my leaving Bengal, than during all the rest of the time I had been in India. The amazing abatement of prejudice on the part of the natives; the readiness with which Christian books and doctrines were received in the schools; the sudden opening of the door of education among Hindoo females; these, and similar features of an encouraging nature, pressed conviction upon my mind, that the signs of the times loudly proclaim to the friends of missions to India, that in due season they shall reap, if they faint not."—pp. 102—106.

"When I left Bengal in the month of November, 1822, there was one Hindoo, concerning whom the missionaries in Calcutta had hopes that he was really, from upright motives, seeking admission into the Christian church; these hopes have been subsequently strengthened, and he has been actually baptized. Herein there has been a similarity between the first-fruit of missionary exertions reaped by the London Society, and that gathered by the Baptist missionaries. The first Hindoo convert, effected by the instrumentality of the missionaries of the Baptist denomination, was won to the Cross of Christ after their society had commenced its operations in India about

seven years: the London Society in Calcutta have obtained their first convert after about the same lapse of time.

"It may be added, that the Church Society reaped their first-fruits at Burdwan also, after having the faith and patience of their missionaries put to the test, during a period of about the same duration."—pp. 109, 110.

The ample refutation which these extracts afford to the Abbé Dubois' unsupported statements, is but a single specimen, out of many, of the entire overthrow which he has effected of all his assertions. In fact, it is made abundantly obvious, that the Abbé's opinion is utterly worthless, and that he can scarcely be said to deserve the credit even of wishing well to the benevolent efforts of British Christians in India. Strongly as he condemns the system of the Hindoos, and dreadful as is the representation he offers of their moral and religious state, we look in vain for those traces of Christian love and pity, which, even in a Catholic, ought to have exhibited some kindlings in the contemplation of the bare effort to give them that word of life, which, however imperfect the version, is the common possession and the common boast of Catholic and Protestant. Upon the very important subject of the *versions*, the Abbé is unusually severe and bitter, and is justly reproved by Mr. Townley, for the dishonourable way in which he has traduced the labours of men, of whom he is an incompetent judge, and the greater part of whose translations he has never seen. Mr. Townley's candour and judgment on this subject do him much credit; for while he speaks with due admiration of the efforts of the translators, he admits, that their versions may have many defects, and cannot be expected to be free from inaccuracies; yet maintains, that as *first* efforts, they are deserving of praise, and that, as preparing the way, and affording a basis for improvements,

they are of unspeakable importance. How many versions were made by men of consummate skill into the English tongue, before we were furnished with the present admirable translation! And is not this imperfect? Why then should the Missionaries be condemned, because they have not produced Oriental versions, free from inaccuracy, and possessing all the ease and elegance which the highest native scholars could impart? But we must conclude our remarks: the subject is too extensive to be exhibited, even in its general bearings, within the compass of a review; and we beg leave, therefore, to recommend to universal perusal, this calm, comprehensive, and able reply to the objections of the Abbé. Our readers will be highly gratified, as we can assure them we have been, by its perusal: the profits of the work will be devoted to Missions, —this fact will, we hope, aid its circulation.

A Critical Examination of Dr. Lee's Edition of Jones's Persian Grammar. Glasgow. 8vo. 1824.

WE hastened to the perusal of this pamphlet with no little gratification, the subject on which it treats being one of peculiar interest. If we did not expect any very great increase of our *Persian* lore, yet, at least, we anticipated some judicious and critical remarks on the elementary books of that interesting language, and particularly on Dr. Lee's late publication. One qualification for a critic, we award our anonymous examiner, the full credit of—ill-nature. We could not, though *sói-disant* critics ourselves, have believed, that in these days of professed liberality, language so intemperate as that with which these pages are crowded, would be used by any student of philology; towards a gentleman filling one of the most respectable

stations in an English University. As we have not enjoyed the pleasure even of seeing Dr. Lee's edition of Jones, we shall not presume to give an opinion respecting the improvements which it professes to have made on the original. We shall, however, venture to reprobate, in the most decided manner, the opprobrious imputation intended to be conveyed in the very commencement of this tract, where its anonymous author says,

“If, however, the laurels won by the exertions of genius, or the perseverance of industry, are used as passports to recommend the performances of other hands, for the mere purpose of securing a copy-right, there is reason to fear, that the writer who so lends his reputation, has abandoned the path to the temple of fame, to inquire after lucre.”—P. 2.

Such sentences as this, and others in which we are told, that “it is difficult to decide whether the professor's knowledge of the Arabic or the French language be the most defective,” will, we have no doubt, appear to all judicious readers, as very unamiable specimens of the spirit which one scholar should cultivate towards another, and especially towards a professor of the learned languages. With the philological part of this pamphlet, we are not anxious to contend. We shall, however, venture to contest with the author in one or two of his assertions. Dr. Lee having “expressed his conviction, that no considerable progress can be expected in the study of the Persian language, until some progress shall have been made in the Arabic,” our author subjoins, “We shall, notwithstanding this assertion, venture to express our doubts as to the accuracy of this position.” From some acquaintance we ourselves have with the Oriental tongues, and from our knowledge of the opinions of several scholars, in both the Persian and Arabic languages,

we are enabled fully to coincide with Dr. Lee. He who is in any degree acquainted with the Persian tongue, knows that its obligations to the Arabic are not in any sense definite, as is the case with modern European languages, in the adoption of words from the Latin and Greek; but that every Persian writer uses his own pleasure in adopting pure and unchanged Arabic words, without any question whether custom has given them a place in the language in which he writes, and, in fact, without reference to any authority similar to that by which, in European languages, words derived from other tongues become naturalized. Thus, if we except the *Shah-nameh* of Ferdoosi, perhaps no other Persian work can be named in which pure Arabic roots, and all their several compounds, are not used indiscriminately with those of Persian origin. In the East Indies, where, amongst the higher order of natives, the colloquial and scientific tongue is Persian, that style of conversation is universally esteemed the most polite, which is most intermixed with Arabic words. This being the case, we conceive Dr. Lee's assertion is fully justified. The examiner's attempt to overthrow Dr. Lee's opinion, by bringing forward the English language in its adoption of Latin and French words, as an instance, is not to the point; for in our tongue, we have a standard, by which the admission of such words is legislated; and a writer who should borrow from either of those tongues words as yet not admitted by that authority, would be censured as pedantic; but no such authority existing in the Persian tongue, the borrowing of Arabic words is indefinite. We will not defend all of Dr. Lee's statements, but surely many of them, occurring in the strictly grammatical department, may be attributed to typographical error,

or to mere oversight, and certainly do not deserve such severe language as that with which they are reprobated. Let our readers contemplate this sweeping estimate of a grammar, edited by the Cambridge Professor of Arabic.

"Error is heaped upon error—and there is such a distressing want of any thing like arrangement, that it appears more like a school-boy theme than the production of a Cambridge Professor!!!"
—p. 78.

In conclusion, we shall remind the examiner, that it became him, who, throughout all his pamphlet, endeavours to detect Dr. Lee's ignorance of the Persian and Arabic Grammar at least, to be careful to avoid grammatical errors in the use of his own language. We recommend him to examine pp. 57, 72, and 83, for instances of his own fallibility. We do not apprehend, that Dr. Lee will suffer any diminution of his fame from this violent examiner, though perhaps he may find it necessary to attend, in a future edition of his Persian grammar, to a few errors, which his anonymous antagonist has discovered, and which, for the sake of science, we regret to see pointed out in so illiberal, and ungentlemanly a manner.

~~~~~  
*A Discourse on Spirituality of Mind, delivered at Chapel Street Meeting, Blackburn. By Joseph Fletcher, A. M.—Westley.*

MR. FLETCHER well remarks in his introduction, that it is the *Spirit* "which alone renders man capable of resembling and enjoying God, and therefore capable of indefinite progression in mental and moral excellence." But it is the *Spirit* which they shamefully and almost universally neglect. The natural life is cherished with the greatest diligence; every thing that can put it in the least risk is avoided; every thing that can contribute to embellish or render it more pleasurable, is courted and

coveted; and the body, with its numerous little interests, all of which will soon be covered with a single sod of earth, is prized and guarded, as if it were the chief good and highest end of man. But the soul is treated by the generality of men as if its interests were despicable, or its very existence questionable. Yet the soul—let the reader ponder the trite fact—the soul is the only thing that gives importance, lustre, and value to the body—which, without it, is but a dwelling forsaken of its inhabitant—a piece of finely wrought machinery, without either spring, or motion, or use. The soul—how vast are its powers—how wonderful and subtle its operations—how lofty and brilliant its conceptions—how acute and penetrating its faculties of understanding—how vigorous and quick its ingenuity—how bright and delightful its imagination—how useful, comprehensive, and inexplicable in memory and affection. Yet its true glory is debased—its real interests overlooked—and its permanent happiness little consulted amidst the endless anxieties, the artificial wants, and abortive labours, of the busy throng of men. Even where the importance of its great interests is admitted, the necessity of promoting its spirituality felt, and the high end of its salvation devoutly pursued, no occurrence is too insignificant to divert the attention, and produce a temporary suspension of the mental vigour from spiritual things. Assuredly this is the great sin and the great punishment of our nature. God is not in all their thoughts, therefore their souls become debased or dead, fulfilling the awful word, *to be carnally minded is death*—their intellects are debilitated to an extreme upon all purely spiritual subjects, or run out into a weak and fruitless exuberance; their pleasures are short lived, fluctuating, and dreamy. It is infinitely

important, therefore, that the subject of this discourse should be pressed upon the attention of all men, as the very body and life of true religion—the sum and crown of human glory—the element of an imperishable happiness—and the source of a high and ever-growing perfection. We must not, however, trust ourselves to enlarge upon the important subject of this discourse. Mr. Fletcher's mode of discussion is admirably adapted to the end of pulpit instruction—and the matter, as well as the subject of this discourse, does him credit. His talents, both as a writer and preacher, are too well known to need commendation by us. It is merely necessary that we should exhibit a brief outline of this excellent and useful discourse. The text is taken from Rom. viii. 5. *They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit.*—He first considers the origin of the affection denominated spirituality of mind. II. Contemplates its characteristic indication. III. Points out the means by which it may be promoted: and, IV. States the importance of minding the things of the spirit. Any farther analysis of a discourse, which we hope will be very generally read, would be useless. It will be more satisfactory to present a specimen of the able and interesting manner in which the subject is handled. The following citation is from the last head.

“ 2. *This spiritual affection is essential to the enjoyment of religion.* ‘It is life and peace’—a living peace and a peaceful life. Some professors have as much knowledge of religion as makes them miserable; but not enough to make them happy. They are not contented with this world, and yet derive no satisfaction from the prospect of another. Decision of character is necessary to the felicities which spring from genuine piety; but it can exist only in the renewed and spiritual mind. There may be the strength of an energetic and ardent resolution—the hardihood of a constitutional firmness—the power of a sectarian attachment, without any partici-



pation of the spirit of Christian decision. This is the exclusive result of intercourse with God in the life of faith, the exercises of devotion, and the habits of obedience. Let such principles and affections be felt, and the believer has 'the witness in himself.' He has an inward consciousness of the value of the Gospel from the experience of its adaptation to his state, which gives him the evidence of moral demonstration in its favour: and hence originates true and enlightened decision.

"But, independently of this reaction of holy principles on the happiness of their possessions, there is in the divine promises a special provision for its enjoyment. The cultivation of devout affections is intimately connected with the manifestations of the divine favour; and, on the other hand God, has announced his displeasure against those who know his name and are 'walking contrary to HIM.' To your recollections and consciousness, my Christian friends, I make an appeal on this subject. Have you ever enjoyed spiritual peace, when you have neglected divine ordinances, cherished worldly affections, and become indifferent to the exercises of devotion? What is the source of your most poignant regrets—what most powerfully awakens the bitter feelings of self-reproach—renders the means of grace unproductive of joy, and exposes you to the most dangerous incursions of your spiritual foes? Is it not when you are 'minding the things of the flesh' and not 'minding the things of the Spirit?' It is the want of spirituality that beclouds your prospects, causes darkness, and doubt, and fear, to surround your path—obscures the evidences of your interest in the divine favour—gives power to your invisible enemies—and leads either to the experience of painful and morbid dejection, or the more dangerous feeling of unholy presumption. On the contrary, when you are enabled to 'walk with God,' and maintain spiritual intercourse by faith and prayer; 'the joy of the Lord is your strength;'—and, like the Psalmist, you exclaim,—'I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart.'"—pp. 40, 41.

The whole discourse is of the same instructive and useful character, and is completely free from that affectation, extravagance, and false glitter, which characterize too many modern sermons. We can cordially recommend Mr. Fletcher's discourse, both for style and matter, to all our readers.

*Leisure Hours.* 12mo. pp. 384.  
4s. London: Longman and Co. 1823.

From the "Preface" to this admirable little volume, we learn that its contents were originally published in a series of periodical tracts, during the years 1820 and 1821, in Edinburgh, as we presume from the date. The collection consists, as the title suggests, of miscellaneous matter, all of which is good, and a large portion peculiarly interesting. From the general level of the composition, and from the occasional introduction of cautions against radicalism and infidelity, we presume that these "tracts" were primarily intended for the lower classes, generally shrewd and well instructed, of Scottish society; and, without giving any opinion as to the expediency of mixing up politics and religion, we shall say, in general terms, that the execution is excellently suited to the intention. "Hark ye"—"Relics of my Father"—and, above all, "the Gardener of Glammis"—are delightful specimens of instructive story-telling. Tom Roberts, and his mode of beating, or rather hammering, a retreat from a puzzling dilemma, is a capital sketch; and the character of Maggs Mary is quite an original draught. The serious papers are impressively written; and, altogether, the book contains a very attractive and profitable *melange*. We shall extract, as a specimen, part of the description of a Scottish Sabbath.

"Few objects are more gratifying to the eye than the interior of a country church in the north of Scotland during the worship of the Sabbath. Here are assembled the families from the adjoining village, the inhabitants of the quiet valley, and the inmates of the solitary shepherd's cottage on the distant hill;—the children of a few years, not yet old enough to estimate aright the blessings of the house of prayer, but not too young to acquire the habit of regularly attending where these blessings are dispensed;—the venerable fathers of the parish,

with their smooth, sunburned countenances, attired in those antiquated suits of liberal dimensions, in which they have made their appearance on the Sabbaths of many a long-past year;—and the cleanly comfortable-looking matrons, with their red rokelaya wrapped about their shoulders, or their variously tinted tartan plaids encompassing their healthful cheeks, like the fringe of copsewood that encircles some of their own Highland lakes, when adorned in all the speckled beauties of October. Then what a hearty sound—rude indeed but pleasing—is sent forth from the multitude of rustic voices that unite in the only part of the Scottish worship, in which the congregation articulately join—and what a rustling of the leaves of Bibles, as some passage under quotation is referred to and read!—O see that honest old creature of fourscore and nine, sitting on the undermost step of the pulpit stair! It does one's heart good to look at her, with her well-thumbed large-type Testament on her knee, and her nip-nose spectacles across her face. She is the mother of the parish, and is known in her neighbourhood by the simple and kindly name of "Grannie."—Her house is almost half a mile from church, yet stormy must be the day on which she is not to be found in her accustomed corner; and hard do the children often strive around her door, which of them is to set out at her early hour with her to church, and which is to carry her book, and which to accompany her home. Poor dears! they shall in no wise lose their reward for their attachment to "Grannie." Then, again, what a picture is presented at the dispersion of the worshippers when the service is concluded! Passing from the wide-opened doors along the grassy mounts that rise over the resting-place of their forefathers, they diverge in clusters towards the different pathways that lead them to their homes. As they advance through the village, one group disappears, and then another, a few of the graver men stopping perhaps for a while to express a thought about some pithy passage in their minister's discourse; a little farther on may be seen a pair of anxious mothers, conning over all their children's complaints and their family occurrences during the preceding week, and then dropping into their respective dwellings;—the young men and maidens tripping more lightly along, after exchanging the cordial shake, turn off also to the scattered cottages and farms; and the remnant of the whole party is at length seen afar off, threading the narrow footpath to the outposts of the parish, like a file of soldiers tracking

their way through a distant pass, or a line of sheep curving across the brow of a hill."

*Matthew Henry at Hackney. To which is added, Strictures on the Unitarian Writings of the Rev. Lant Carpenter, LL.D.—London: Seeley and Son.*

A FACETIOUS writer, who published a dialogue about sixty years ago, when the Arian controversy was at its height, puts the following question into the mouth of one of his spokesmen—"Did you ever try to hold an eel by the tail?" The reply is, "Yes, but not with much success." The illustration is then supplied by a reference to Arian reasonings; and the same thing is still abundantly obvious in the history of what is now somewhat too courteously denominated the Unitarian Controversy. Appeal to Scripture, and you are told instantly the version is false—appeal to the original and authorized text, and a thousand chances to one but you will be informed, that there is a manuscript somewhere, and of some authority, which reads it differently, or omits it altogether—or if neither can be alleged, still there is the powerful solvent at hand, of metaphor, figurative language, &c.—and, when driven from these resources, still it may be supposed that the writer *reasoned inconclusively*. We remember being engaged, several years ago, in a verbal dispute with a living and eminent character among the Socinians, who, after being assailed by many strong scriptures, against all of which he alleged *false reading, or absence* from some ancient MS. was at last reminded of the passage in our Lord's commission to the disciples, Matt. xxvii. 19, *Baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, and was challenged to deny that it was either falsely rendered, or absent from any manuscript or version of au-

thority; to which he then said, "I know it; but I could rather believe that that text has been corruptly introduced into all the versions; yes, I could rather give up the New Testament itself, than admit the absurd doctrine of the Trinity." Here, of course, all discussion was set aside, as the matter was reduced to what the opponent *could* or *could not* believe. So with this controversy in general, the business hinges more upon this point than many are aware. We must be permitted to say, that any sober-minded scholar, capable of entering into the Socinian explanations and criticisms, cannot fail to perceive, on the very face of them, the character of laboured and hard-wrought excuses; a sort of plausible and ingenious pleadings, constructed to cover the reluctance of the human will to bow to the high authority of revelation, rather than to elicit the truth of God, and discover "the mind of the Spirit." This very fact we have heard stated, by an eminent public character, as the reason of his being first led to renounce a system to which, at one period of his life, he had been strongly inclined. He took up Mr. Belsham's *Calm Inquiry*, but its perversions appeared so gross, its criticisms so unnatural and far-fetched; so evidently got up, not by the aid of sound sense and devout respect for Scripture, but by the hand of human ingenuity, that he closed the book with a decided conviction of the writer's partiality, perversion, and prejudice. The very effort at sophistication had, upon the reader's mind, an effect the opposite of that intended.—But we had almost forgotten *Matthew Henry at Hackney.*

The pamphlet before us is a sort of miscellaneous attack upon the Unitarian Philologists. It commences with representing the writer as passing through Hackney,

and observing something of a stir; he follows a train of persons into a chapel, which it appears was occupied by a Socinian congregation; to which, after a short time, two personages are introduced, and one of them commences the long discourse contained in the first part of this pamphlet. The venerable speaker, who is represented as introduced by a younger and more diminutive person, is intended, we presume, for Matthew Henry, while in the other character, who introduces the speaker by a sort of prologue, we recognise Dr. Watts. It is not easy to give our readers an idea of the contents of this pamphlet; but we may cite the introductory sentences of the chief speaker.

"Casting my eyes on this assembly, I seem to recognize the features of fathers, to whom my soul was united in the best of bonds. They were men sincere in principle, pious in sentiment, and decided in character. Many of them were descended from the martyrs and confessors of their country; and all of them had suffered obloquy on account of their religion. Having made the Bible, and the Bible only, the pillar of their faith, they nobly scorned to bow the knee to the tyrannies and idolatries of papal Rome. An ancestry so faithful and dear to God, is the highest honour that posterity can enjoy. They are as the names of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, but the promised race; names to which an offended Heaven once yielded, and sent fire from heaven to accept the oblation of Elijah, offered through faith in Him who was to come.

"On this ancestry I would congratulate you to-day, as the hopes and heirs of your fathers, did not other sentiments forcibly obtrude. A liberation from the faith and practice of your fathers, seems now to have become your first glory and chief boast. You even have the effrontery to excuse their weakness, on the ground that the present controversy (according to White) was not then agitated. I would congratulate you on the affluence and splendour, the promised blessings of the covenant with which you apparently are connected, did not the aspects of a desolated sanctuary call for tears rather than joys. If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? How can I rejoice at the splendour of your equipage and courtly appearance,

while that wicked Ahaz has thrown the altar behind the temple; while the idol, *Reason*, has been made a substitute for the Shekinah, and the glorious cross obscured as a *Galga*! The names of Sibbs, Bolton, Burroughs, Baxter, Bates, Calamy, Mantou, Caryl, Ambrose, Jacomb, Flavel, Mead, and a cloud of others, are now no longer known to this congregation." [Here a buzz went through the congregation, concerning the exercise of reason in religion, rational Christianity, and the like.] "Be composed," resumed the speaker; "we come not to make apologies; we know nothing of fear in avowing the truth. The hallowed mysteries of the Christian faith, now degraded to problems of academical diversion, are like the mysteries of nature, all superior, but never contrary to reason. They abase the pride of reason. Our knowledge is of no account: it was but yesterday, that he wiped our eyes from the darkness of the womb. They all tend to glorify God in the minds of the simple, and shed a hallowing influence on the heart."—pp. 2—4.

There are in this work many able and well-directed blows dealt

against the anti-trinitarian heresy. In fact the author displays an ability at argument, a skill in writing, and an extent of learning, which we regret to see employed in the desultory sort of warfare carried on in his present production. There is something too in the *machinery* with which he connects his *Strictures*, to which we have strong objections. There is, moreover, some impropriety in making Matthew Henry the reprover of modern writers. We should much rather have seen the pamphlet in the form of a plain and simple exposure of the sophistries of Socinian writers, and the flimsiness of Socinian criticisms. As it is, however, it is well deserving of attention, and furnishes many glaring instances of the corruptions, perversions, and sophistries of the principal modern advocates of Socinianism.

---

## *Literaria Rediviva*; or, *The Book Worm.*

---

*Observations on Monsieur De Sorbier's Voyage into England, by Thomas Sprat, Fellow of the Royal Society.* 8vo. 1665.

"'Twas a happy time when all learning was in manuscript, and some little officer did keep the keys of the library. When the clergy needed no more knowledge than to read the liturgy, and the laity no more clerkship than to save them from hanging. But now, since printing came into the world, such is the mischief, that a man cannot write a book but presently he is answered." Certainly this answering of books is the greatest enemy to uniformity of opinion that the restless brain of man ever invented. If it were not for this mischievous spirit, we might doze away our life in one delightful dream. How many ingenious treatises have been annihilated by this responsive sys-

tem, which, had they been suffered to proceed undisturbed, would have settled all our subtle disputes into one calm and unthinking acquiescence! But a few years ago, a learned bishop obliged the world with a refutation of Calvinism. These infuriated respondents could not suffer it to dwell in peace, and though as harmless and inoffensive a little thing as can well be imagined, two doughty champions at once couched their mighty spears against it, and it has never held up its head since. To be sure, one of these was a hot-headed Welchman, and they were both of the Genevan school, and so nothing else could be expected. But this spirit pervades all ranks of literary adventurers. We are in daily expectation of seeing some typographical *Creighton* undertaking to answer all books that ever have been, or ever will be,

printed. In our melancholy forebodings of the universal scepticism which must inevitably be the result of this predatory system of literature, we have, however, one source of consolation. Happily there are some of our modern productions which may defy even this destructive mode of warfare, by their thorough unintelligibility. We have not yet attained to the art of answering books which we cannot understand. Happy age, to have produced a species of writing, unthought of by our plodding ancestors! Talk we of originality—we will venture to affirm, that there is more originality in "*Overton on Genesis and Daniel*," and in "*The Grammar of infinite Forms*," than in all the eccentric productions of all the roundhead fraternity, from the first of the *Brownists*, through all the different ramifications of *Millennarians*, *Fifth-monarchy-men*, and *Seventh-day Baptists*, down to the very last section of that diversified nomenclature. If ever these books are answered, the task must be undertaken by the authors themselves, except they can recal the departed spirits of *Henry Nicholas*, *Boehmen*, or *Ludowick Muggleton*.

This system of answering is, perhaps, as ancient as the revival of literature; and doubtless it might be traced even to a more remote period, by those who are familiar with the classic writers. Its perpetuity, however, like that of animated nature, is a perpetuity of the species, not of individuals. The individuals have generally but a very limited existence. Being only of local interest, they die with the hour which gave them birth. Like all *impromptus*, they lose their interest in the first effusion. A few, in which are the seeds of immortality, "the thought which lives," have protracted their existence beyond the ordinary limit, and long after the occasion

which originated them is forgotten, with all the disadvantages of allusions whose edge is blunted by the corroding hand of time, and jests whose point is no longer felt, have stemmed against that current which has borne away their fellows to oblivion. Unlike the most of their species, which borrow a temporary interest from the circumstances with which they are connected, and which are perused from the desire of being acquainted with those circumstances, these reflect a lustre on their otherwise obscure originals, which are only investigated because of their relation to these scions of immortality. Critics in general have awarded to *Boyle's Answer to Bentley* a very distinguished station in the works of this class, and if we judge rightly, the present volume will be permitted to take its place among them, as well as *Marvel's Rehearsal transposed*, and *Alsop's Melius Inquirendum*, for which we have already pleaded.

*Thomas Sprat* was as extraordinary a man as any in the age in which he lived, distinguished as it was by the honourable title of *Augustan*. He wrote on almost every subject, and equally well on all. *Felton*, who will be allowed as authority, says of his "*History of the Royal Society*," that "it shows how well philosophy becometh a narration, and that the progress of knowledge is as entertaining as that of arms; her conquests more extended, and her victories more glorious. The diction is every where suited to the subject; the whole work speaketh the author in a studied easiness, and correct accuracy of expression, and a style as much improved, as the philosophy he treateth of." *Dunton*\* says of him,

\* We would not be thought to lean much on the authority of *Dunton*, who was in truth nothing but a literary gossip; yet in his characters of men we are to consider that he rather spake the voice of



"He is a great master of the English tongue, and may deservedly be called the universal scholar; witness his matchless *History of the Royal Society*, and his other works, which have supported their first character to this day: they have flourished into reputation by the length of their date, and like wine improved with age, they never grow stale upon our hands; not like your ordinary coin, which may go to-day and to-morrow be called in; but like gold, by weight, which is eternally current." But we must content ourselves with these attestations to his general merits. Of the subject of the present article, the judicious critic, whose commendation of "*The History of the Royal Society*" we have already quoted, asserts, "His answer to *Sorbier* is so handsome a way of exposing an empty, trifling, pretending pedant, the wit so lively, the satire so courtly and so severe, and his address in maintaining the honour of our country so masterly and accomplished, that he maketh his adversary a ridiculous thing, too inconsiderable for our anger, at once the subject of our derision and contempt." Monsieur *Sorbier*, as our readers doubtless generally know, was a French gentleman of literary taste, who about the period of the Restoration travelled into England, and subsequently published to the world an account of his travels, containing many absurd and malicious accounts of the principal places he had visited whilst in this country, and reflecting indecorously on the literary character of many of the principal ornaments of our nation, and indeed on the character of our nation at large. Mons. *Sorbier's* qualifications for this universal censorship are thus stated by his witty respondent:

"He was borne at *Orange*, and for a long time professed the Protestant religion; public opinion, which is always to be regarded, than that of his own judgment.

gion; all or the greatest part of his writings, have been only some few letters, a small panegyrick or two, a translation of Mr. *Hobbs's De Cive* into French, this description of England, and another of Holland. His first employment was to teach a younger son of the Count *De la Suse*, then he was made usher to a scholè in his native city. Both these places he lost upon suspicion of some heterodox opinions in the fundamentals of Christianity. In this discontent he came to *Paris*, renounced his religion, and turned *Papist*. And at last, by many insinuations and flatteries, he obtained to have the profits of a small canonship of *Avignon* settled upon him. This, Sir, is all the bruit that Mons. *De Sorbier* has made in the world. And this confidant of the muses, this darling of *Parnassus*, this favourite of cardinals, this companion of governors of provinces, this censor of nations, this judge of kings, tho' he strove to advance himself in two religions, in the one did never rise to a higher office than that of a pedant, in the other never got a greater preferment than a pitiful sine-cure of two hundred crowns a-year!"

*Sorbier* having in the course of his invective against England, asserted, that "the English are suspicious, dark, irregular, capricious, and that they have a melancholy peculiar to themselves;" *Sprat* rejoins,

"In this, methinks, his small philosophy should have instructed him better, that such dismal qualities are not the necessary companions of the complexion of angels, which he allows them. But he that went dancing from *Paris* to *Calais*, and at *Calais*, as soon as he alighted out of the *chasse-marin*, could not abstain from going to a puppet-play, (for that I suppose he means, when he says, he saw a comedy there,) is not a fit man to censure what is the difference between what is fantastical, and good humour, between the serious and the sullen. However, he has made some recompence to us for this disgrace. He has described the vigorous, and the sprightly humour of the French, in such a manner, as makes it no very desirable accomplishment. For he tells us, that wherever they come, they make such a noise, as to draw all the children, and the dogs in the town after them. And I suppose, it is such a kind of bruit as this, that Mr. *De Sorbier* says, he has made in all places where he arrived."

We make our next extract for the purpose of showing the general opinion of the times in which it was written, as to the subser-

viency of the Dissenters to the King's restoration ; a subserviency which *Sprat* himself, though a bitter antagonist to the sectarians, does not even attempt to deny. *Sorbier* having attributed that event wholly to the Presbyterians, *Sprat* answers,

"All the circumstances of that glorious restoration are still, Sir, fresh in our memories ; the very noise of those triumphs, which filled the whole world with admiration, seems to be yet scarce out of our ears. And shall we suffer him to fix all the honour of that immortal work on a private sect ? Whereas, it was accomplished by the immediate favour of divine providence, by the wisdom of a victorious general, by the perpetual and immovable fidelity of the royal party, by the hands, the wishes, the tongues, and the united desires of three kingdoms. 'Tis true, indeed, the Presbyterians went along with the mighty torrent ; but the whole course of this happy violence is not therefore to be attributed to them. You see, Sir, I am unawares fallen into a metaphor, which does best resemble that enterprize. It was in that, as in a sudden land-flood, which, as it comes down, carries with it trees, and stones, and houses, and all that it meets in the way. And even all these which lay before quiet, nay, which resisted the first waters while they were weak, do add to the impetuosity of the torrent, when it is going. But we must not, therefore say, that the flood itself took its rise from thence ; seeing it was, in truth, caus'd by rain coming down from heaven, and by streams flowing in from every part of the country."

The French traveller having spoken very disrespectfully of many of the learned professors in the universities, and in particular of *Dr. Willis*, *Dr. Sprat* says,

"I am able to give another reason why *M. De Sorbier* did profit so little by his conversation. The substance of it was reported to me from *Dr. Willis*, his own mouth. And I doubt not but the remarkable sincerity and integrity, which that excellent man preserves in all his writings, would make this character of the other's vanity to be believed, though we had not so many other proofs of it. When *M. De Sorbier* came first to visit him, the Doctor esteemed him to be a man of some real and solid knowledge : the great names of *Des Cartes* and *Mersennus*, which he hath frequently in his mouth, might have persuaded him as much : he began to treat him accord-

ingly : he entered into discourse with him, about some parts of *chymistry* and *physick*, in which he desired his opinion. The professor delivered it frankly and plainly as it became a philosopher, without deceit, or ornament. But expecting that he would have continued the argument with some material objection, he soon found that the traveller understood nothing of the whole matter ; but answered him as little to the purpose, as if he had only said, *Pas dello pator*. He tried him in other subjects. But nothing could be got of him, except only some few philosophical terms, and ends of poetry, as in *puris naturalibus—ex aquo et bono contundantur grosso modo—Homo est animal credulum et mendax—and so homini*. Upon this he gave him over, as he would have done a young traveller of twenty years old, and left him to reckon the college quadrangles, to tell the pillars in *St. John's cloyster*, to commend their grove, to measure *King Harry's sword*, to describe *St. Katherine's college*, (if there be any such there,) to examine why one of the colleges took its name from a brazen nose, to number the books in the *Bodleian library*, to consider why it was built in the form of an *H*, and to count how many folios and how many quartos are above and below in each shelf."

We conclude our extracts with *Sprat's* remarks on *M. De Sorbier's* animadversions on our culinary economy.

"After all these signs of his excellent judgment and generous mind, there still, Sir, remains that which he has given of his good palate. For he has boldly determined the controversy, that had long depended in all the kitchens of England and France, which is the best way of eating chinees of beef and mutton, or bisques and potages. This, I confess, was a matter fit to be decided by that historian, critic, mathematician, orator, and physician, who had travelled throughout the world to acquaint himself with all the learned men of all countries, and to push on all sciences to perfection. He has here indeed behaved himself like the true natural and experimental philosopher, whose business it is to take in all manner of observations, that can be got from the senses. You see, Sir, how fairly I treat him. I follow the very criticisms of his appetite to be a part of his philosophy ; and I look upon his affection to friecies before whole joynits, to proceed from his love to the doctrine of atoms before that of the two great standing dishes of matter and form. You may now, Sir, perhaps expect, that I should make some comparison between the French dyet, and the English. It were, I confess, a pleasant, and a weighty argument, But I am resolved to pass it

over, not that I think we have the worst of the cause, but for a particular reason of my own. It is, that M. De Sorbier may still remain in his error; for as long as he is ignorant, that there is any good house-keeping in England, we are like to have no more of his company. Yet I cannot but say to the advantage of boiled

beef, and roast, that the English have the same sincerity in their diet, which they have in their manners; and as they have less mixture in their dishes, so they have less sophisticate composition in their hearts, than the people of some other nations."

## ANALYTICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*An Answer to the Question, Why are you a Congregational Dissenter. By the Rev. Jos. Morrison, Stebbing, Essex. Price 6d. Holds-worth.*

THIS is a very excellent tract, admirably adapted to satisfy inquirers, and so constructed as to supply no matter of just offence to persons of other religious denominations. In ten reasons for embracing congregational principles, the author has embodied much sound information, and satisfactory argument; and if his tract is thought by any not to supply that complete and succinct defence of congregational principles, which has long been a desideratum, it will yet be esteemed one step towards it, and is a good earnest of the further prosecution of this subject, which we understand is designed by the author. We recommend the distribution of this tract among dissenting congregations, and the use of it in dissenting families, as affording in a small compass, ample reasons for attachment to our principles. The typographical part is very well executed, and reflects great credit on the printer.

*Two Sermons on the Subject of Theatrical Amusements. By the Rev. T. Best, A. M. Price 4d. or 3s. per Dozen.*

WE understand that this worthy clergyman has met with considerable opposition in preaching and publishing his opinions on Theatrical Amusements; and that, in consequence of this, the Sheffield gentlemen have formed a Shakspeare Club, for the purpose of supporting their theatre against the attacks of Mr. Best; but happily with little success. We have read the sermons with great satisfaction,

and we do most earnestly recommend them to the attention of our readers, especially to any who may have any doubts, as to the propriety or impropriety of the attendance of professors of religion at theatres. The excellent Mr. Montgomery, of Sheffield, has had a considerable number of copies printed for circulation, and has them now on sale at the low price above stated, and we are requested to refer our readers, who desire to purchase them, to apply immediately to him.

*The History of a Servant Maid: to which are added, Mr. Baxter's Advice to Servants. 2s. 6d.*

IN taking up this little work we were greatly surprised to observe that it had neither preface nor table of contents, and that it was not arranged in the usual form of chapter and section. So many fictitious narratives have already been presented to the public, that we cannot help receiving with suspicion all works destitute of a voucher for their truth. We have, however, glanced at the volume before us, and if its pages state the truth, and nothing but the truth, we infer that the *Servant Maid* is the authoress of her own narrative. It states her parents to have been pious, in the humble walks of life. In them was admirably illustrated the divine precept, "Train up a child in the way he should go," and in this daughter the annexed and encouraging promise was happily fulfilled, "when they are old they will not depart from it." We think the little work calculated to be useful, and benevolent persons will find it a good book to put into the hands of their servants.

*A Key to the Bible, containing an Epitome of every Book in the Old and New Testament. By Question and Answer, adapted to Children and Youth. By T. Timpson.*

A LITTLE work of this kind has long been a desideratum to sabbath schools. Mr. Timpson (who has himself been employed in instructing the rising generation) regretted this defect, and from this circumstance was induced to undertake the work before us, and we think he has happily succeeded. The plan appears entirely new, and its brevity and adaptation to the capacities of children render it worthy of the notice of teachers, and the friends of children and youth in general. We shall give our readers a specimen of Mr. T.'s plan.—Question 47. What is the third book in the Bible? Leviticus: so named, because it contains the laws and ceremonies of the Israelites' religion, whose priests were of the tribe of Levi.—48. How is it divided? Into twenty-seven chapters or four sections.—49. What does the first section contain? Laws concerning the sacrifices. Chap. i.—50. The second section? The institution and consecration of the high priests. Chap. viii. 10.—51. The third section? Laws concerning purifications. Chap. xi. 22.—52. The fourth section? Laws concerning the sacred festivals. Chap. xxiii. 27.—53. What was the design of God in appointing such ceremonies and sacrifices to the Israelites? To shew the evil nature of sin; and by these types, to direct their minds to look forward to the coming of Christ, who was appointed to offer himself a real sacrifice for sin, &c. &c.

*A Sketch of the most distinguishing Tenets of various Religious Denominations, from the Commencement of the Christian Era to the present Time, 1821. Second Edition. By the Rev. James Churchill.*

THIS is a very legible and useful chart, containing a considerable mass of valuable information compressed into a small compass. The arrangement is simple, but very convenient, and this large and well-filled sheet will be found a most

available appendage to the furniture of a divinity-student's library. We have observed a few errors of the press which may be easily corrected with the pen.

*Lectures on the History of Joseph. By the Rev. John Davies, of Bath. 5s. 6d.—Westley.*

THE publication of these Lectures originated in the wish of some of the friends of the author, before whom they had been previously delivered in a regular series of Sabbath evening discourses. They are dedicated to the Rev. Wm. Harris, LL.D. Theological Tutor at Hoxton Academy. The volume contains ten Lectures, comprising a complete "History of Joseph," from his birth to his decease. As to the author's plan, though it pretends not to much originality, it is yet judicious; the remarks are uniformly pious and useful, and we were pleased to observe a pervading reference to the great and peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. The work upon the whole is well adapted to the author's design, and is deserving the attention of pious readers.

*The Evangelical Rambler, Vol. I. 3s. 6d.—Westley.*

WE have long ere this heard of Ramblers, but never till now of one that was denominated Evangelical. We are pleased, however, to remark that the book before us is in perfect accordance with its title, and the fact, "that truth forms the basis of every narrative, and of every description," makes it additionally interesting. This is the first volume of a projected series, and is calculated to answer the benevolent design of the writer; we sincerely wish him success, and that his volumes may ramble into the benighted cottages of the ignorant, and be instrumental in leading them to happiness and God. Benevolent individuals will find it a good book to circulate among the poor; and even the more refined may read it with advantage. It is cheap, and consists of thirty-six closely printed and well written papers; the titles of which our limits forbid us to name.

## VARIETIES, LITERARY, SCIENTIFIC, &c.

### *Daily Resolutions of J. C. Lavater.*

"I will never, either in the morning or evening, proceed to any business, until I have at first retired, at least for a few moments, to a private place, and implored God for his assistance and blessing.

"I will neither do, nor undertake any thing, which I would abstain from doing if Jesus Christ were standing visibly before me, nor any thing of which I think it possible that I shall repent in the uncertain hour of my certain death. I will, with the Divine aid, accustom myself to do every thing, without exception, in the name of Jesus Christ, and as his disciple; to sigh to God continually for the Holy Ghost; and to preserve myself in a constant disposition for prayer.

"Every day shall be distinguished by at least one particular work of love.

"Every day I will be especially attentive to promote the benefit and advantage of my own family in particular.

"I will never eat or drink so much as shall occasion to me the least inconvenience or hindrance in my business; and between meal-times (a morsel in the evening excepted) I will abstain as much as possible from eating and from wine.

"Wherever I go, I will first pray to God that I may commit no sin there, but be the cause of some good.

"I will never lay down to sleep without prayer, nor, when I am in health, sleep longer than, at most, eight hours.

"I will every evening examine my conduct through the day by these rules, and faithfully note down in my journal how often I offend against them.

"O God! thou seest what I have here written. May I be able to read these my resolutions every morning with sincerity, and every evening with joy and the clear approbation of my conscience."

### *Roman Catholic Versions of the Bible.*

"It is a common belief in this country, that Roman Catholics are not allowed the use of any vernacular edition of the Bible. Such a belief is, in the main, unfounded, although the Roman Catholics themselves, and especially the stricter class of Papists, have contributed in no small degree towards its spread. Vernacular translations have indeed been occasionally prohibited by the Roman See, and especially by Pius VI. and Clement VIII.; but so far from such authority having been acknowledged, or the prohibition attended to, there is no country in Europe in which

national versions have not appeared from a very early period of time, and few in which a variety of them have not presented a rival appeal before the bar of the public. In Germany several printed editions were in general circulation before that of Luther, which was completed in 1535, and is the earliest vernacular Bible among the Protestants. In France there were twelve printed editions prior to that of Olivetan. Spain can at least boast of two or three, besides several detached books of the Bible, which are admirably rendered by Luis de Leon, of the university of Salamanca; and, even in Italy, Brucioli translated the Latin of Pagninus as early as 1532, and Mar-mochini the Vulgate about six years afterwards, dedicating it expressly to the Bishop of Rodez: independently of which, the version of Malermi underwent not less than thirteen editions in the space of half a century, anterior even to the era of the Reformation: and it was an express proposition of the late intelligent and liberal Pontiff, that the Scriptures 'are sources to which all ought to have free access, in order to draw from them a sound doctrine and a pure morality.'"—*God's Memoirs of Dr. Geddes*, pp. 4—7.

### *Production of a Biblical Critic.*

"It is curious to observe from what apparently trifling incidents we sometimes derive the whole bent of the dispositions and studies of our future lives. In their religious profession, the parents of the late Dr. Geddes were Roman Catholics; their library consisted of but a very few volumes; and of these the principal book was an English Bible. Having been taught to read in the humble mansion of a schoolmistress, whose name was Sellar, the book that chiefly struck his attention, in the meagre catalogue to which his infant choice was confined, was this family Bible, which, whatever might have been at that time his thirst after knowledge, could not afford him more pleasure to peruse, than it did his parents that it should be perused by him. 'They taught me,' says he, 'to read it with reverence and attention.' His taste was thus fixed from his childhood. From the moment he began to read he became a biblical critic in embryo; it was a passion to which, the more he reflected, the more he surrendered himself, and which, consequently,

'Grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength.'

Had he been under any other circum-



stances, and had his father's library allowed him a greater latitude and variety of study, it may be doubted whether a critical investigation of the sacred records would have formed his chief pursuit. The die, however, was thrown; and such was the entertainment the Bible afforded him, and such the corresponding vigour with which he persevered in its perusal, that it is a well known fact, that before he had reached his eleventh year, he knew all its history by heart—a laudable example of application directed to the best of objects, and which may well challenge the attention of young persons, whether Catholic or Protestant.”—*Good's Memoirs of Dr. Geddes*, pp. 2-4.

*Anecdote of Lord Treasurer Burleigh.*

“That was a sharp, yet just scoff the Lord Treasurer Burleigh put upon a Kentish Knight, who having spent a great estate at Court, and brought himself to one park and a fine house in it, was yet ambitious to entertain the Queen in it. To that purpose he had new painted his gate, with his coat of arms and motto overwritten, thus, OIA VANITAS, in great golden letters. The Treasurer offering to read it, desired to know of the Knight what he meant by OIA, who told him it stood for OMNIA. The Lord replied, Sir, I wonder having made your Omnia so little as you have, you notwithstanding make your Vanitas so large.”—*Herle's Wisdom's Tripos*.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

The proceedings of the Imperial Parliament do not ordinarily come within the range of our observations. We leave to those who can enjoy the contests of political gladiators the unenvied task of recording the questions of mere party debate, and every-day legislation, which excite the intellectual conflicts of that far-famed arena:—with these we meddle not—but when our senators rise to the discussion of subjects which involve the high and holy interests of Christian missions, or even debate those questions which involve the rights of conscience, we conceive our pages are appropriately occupied in recording their deliberations, that our pious readers may thereby judge of “the signs of the times.” Such important topics now solicit their attention, and we trust their great interest will excuse the lengthened notice.

**THE CASE OF THE LATE MISSIONARY, THE REV. JOHN SMITH, OF DEMERARA.**

—The discussion of this afflictive case has deeply occupied the public attention during the last month, and its decision has not disappointed the expectation, nor damped the ardour of the friends of missions. Though we cannot record it as a triumph, yet we rejoice in it as a victory—not merely achieved by the dazzling and splendid eloquence of the distinguished advocates of missions, but mainly by the simple force of truth which none could gainsay or resist—a victory, the effects of which, we dare predict, will be long felt in the councils and the camp of the enemies to the religious instruction of the slave-population of our colonies.

The influence of correct information on this subject, which was diffused

through the press, was soon apparent on the public mind; and the meetings which were held—the resolutions which were published—and the petitions which were prepared in every part of England, discovered the intensity of interest which this question had excited. Upwards of 200 petitions were presented to the House of Commons in eleven days, and the excitement which prevailed on this subject, proved that its discussion was anticipated with no ordinary solicitude.

On June 1st, the day appointed for this celebrated debate, the gallery of the House was opened at the unusually early hour of one o'clock, and it was instantly filled, while immense crowds occupied avenues, unable to gain admission. The House itself was more crowded than it has been on any question of the present session, and the whole appearance of things within and around the House announced a discussion of deep and profound interest.

Mr. BROUGHAM introduced the business to the house by a most able and effective speech of more than three hours, in which he examined the evidence given on the trial, and with admirable skill exposed its fallacy. In characterising the proceedings, he said he had no hesitation in saying, that from their beginning to their fatal termination, there has taken place more of illegality, more of the violation of justice—violation of justice even in the form, as well as in the substance—than in the whole history of modern times, on any inquiry that could be called a judicial proceeding. It was an attempt to put down Missionaries and Methodists, and though the court-martial trembled at the sentence which they had pronounced, he felt it was from an apprehension more applicable to them—

selves, arising from the mandate, that "whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This he believed to be the motive—for if they had dared to murder that innocent man, it is impossible to deny, upon all the inferences, that they must have died the death of murderers. He concluded a brilliant display of his peculiar talents as a lawyer, a statesman, and an orator, by moving, amidst the cheers of the House, the following resolution:—"That a humble address be presented to His Majesty, representing that this House having taken into its most serious consideration the papers laid before them, relating to the trial and condemnation of the late Rev. John Smith, a missionary in the Colony of Demerara, deem it their duty now to declare, that they contemplate with serious alarm, and deep sorrow, the violation of law and justice which is manifested in these unexampled proceedings, and most earnestly praying that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to adopt such measures as in His Royal wisdom may seem meet, for such a just and humane administration of law in that Colony, as may protect the voluntary instructors of the negroes, as well as the rest of His Majesty's subjects, from oppression."

Mr. WILMOT HORTON, the under Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, attempted to reply to the statements of Mr. Brougham, to brand Smith as an enthusiast, and to expose the petition of the London Missionary Society as unphilosophical! This attempt was most ineffective—the embarrassment of the gentleman was extreme—and the feeling of impatience in the House was very unequivocally expressed. He, however, concluded by giving the motion his decided negative.

Sir JAMES MACKINTOSH followed, with all the ardent impetuosity which characterizes his heartfelt eloquence. He defended the petition, and pronounced a merited eulogium on the character of the Rev. J. Austin. He rejoiced that his Honourable Friend had superseded the necessity of entering on any vindication of the innocence and virtue of Mr. Smith, who had died in Demerara, a martyr to the cause of religion, humanity, and civilization. He concluded his admirable speech by an affecting account of poor Smith's sufferings, and of the attempts to brand his memory after his decease—and sat down amidst the loudest cheering from all sides of the House.

Mr. SCARLETT opposed the motion of Mr. Brougham with arguments which have astonished all his admirers, and which can only be accounted for on the principle, that the learned gentlemen was under the strong influence of those feel-

ings which unhappily prevail amongst the greatest part of West Indian gentlemen.

Dr. LUSHINGTON and Mr. CANNING rose, but were rendered quite inaudible by the cries of Adjourn! Adjourn! which was at length agreed to, and the House, which was crowded in every part, adjourned, at half-past one o'clock, the consideration of the motion till the following evening.

By a combination of circumstances, which are well understood, but which it is not necessary to explain, there was not a sufficient number of Members present on the 2d June to keep the House sitting longer than half-past five, and consequently the question was included amongst the dropped motions.

On Friday evening, the 11th of June, Dr. LUSHINGTON moved the order of the day for resuming the debate; and then that learned gentleman entered on the arduous duty of analyzing the evidence, which he managed with great ability and effect. He defended Smith from the charge of enthusiasm; exposed the hateful spirit which exists in Demerara, by reading extracts from the public journals of the Colony, and concluded by imploring Mr. Canning to reflect on the consequences which would result from the rejection of his friend's proposal. Mr. TINDALL attempted, by a learned argument on the Dutch laws which prevail in Demerara, to show, that the punishment of death was always inflicted under it, upon persons who were guilty of concealing rebellion. He did not mean to contend, that the milder law, applied to the subject in England, was not, perhaps, in every respect, more politic as well as humane, but still, the Dutch law was the law of Demerara, and therefore to try Mr. S. by court-martial, under all the circumstances, was more favourable to him than to have tried him before a civil tribunal.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS replied to the preceding speaker on the point of Dutch law, and with much spirit defended our lamented Missionary. The ATTORNEY GENERAL entered on the question of the evidence, but conceded that it was very possible, had he been on the court-martial, that he should not have concurred in their sentence, yet, in his conscience, he believed they had endeavoured to administer justice.

Mr. WILBERFORCE rose amidst loud and long-continued cheering, and, in a strain of impressive eloquence, vindicated the character of the Missionary, and supported the motion. Mr. CANNING said, whatever difference of opinion might prevail, and whatever shades of difference might exist, there was one point upon which all their opi-

nions were in unison; and that was, that the question of this night was the most painful ever discussed within these walls, and there was no part of it which could give satisfaction. After an eloquent attempt to soften down the objections of Mr. Wilberforce, the Honourable Secretary said, "I will not enter on the evidence against Mr. S. I lament the mode of his trial. I deeply deplore his fate, but could not see that which intitled him to the honour of a martyr." He concluded by moving the previous question.

Sir JOSEPH YORKE said he thought Mr. Canning's speech only an elegant apology, but no defence;—that the bloody record ought to be wiped away.

Mr. BROUGHAM, in a speech replete with the most commanding eloquence, which seemed to revive and cheer the exhausted attention of the House, replied with the finest effect to the various speakers, and at three o'clock the House divided:—

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| For Mr. Brougham's motion | 146 |
| Against it.....           | 193 |

Majority 47

In closing our account of this justly celebrated debate, we feel that our readers will think with us, that a victory of no ordinary value has been achieved. On the first evening of discussion, the official organ of the Government on all Colonial questions, met Mr. Brougham's motion with a decided negative; but such was the happy effect of the brilliant labours of that evening, together with the information obtained by the adjournment, that on the subsequent evening, Mr. Canning, the eloquent expounder of the views of the Cabinet, after a speech full of the most important concessions, moved the previous question, by which he partly confessed the proceedings of the Court indefensible. But though the ground was thus changed, and the members of Government veered round to the popular opinion in a considerable degree;—though circulars were issued, and all ministerial retainers were in their seats;—though placemen of avowedly evangelical sentiments were compelled, as we hope most reluctantly, to swell the treasury ranks, still only a majority of 47 could be obtained; whilst, on all hands, the proceedings were confessed to be unconstitutional, the sentence unsupported and cruel, and the character of him who was assailed throughout Europe and the Colonies as an incendiary, a traitor, an instigator of massacre and revolt, is now confessed to have been a pious, excellent, and devoted man,—the blameless victim of Antichristian persecution,

The Directors have terminated the business in a manner worthy of themselves, by passing the following votes of thanks, at their meeting, (June 14th,) immediately following the debate, and which were forwarded to the respective gentlemen, who, we are happy to add, have acknowledged the same in terms at once courteous and flattering.

Resolved,—That the cordial and most grateful thanks of the Directors be presented to Henry Brougham, Esq. for his unsolicited, energetic, and most eloquent defence in the Honourable the House of Commons, of the late Rev. John Smith; by which he has so clearly and powerfully displayed before the world the unsullied innocence and unjust condemnation of that much injured missionary.

That the warmest and most sincere acknowledgments of the Directors be presented to Sir James Mackintosh, for the promptitude with which he undertook to present their petition to the Honourable the House of Commons, in reference to the illegal proceedings in Demerara, and for the distinguished and commanding eloquence with which he advocated the cause of their late missionary, and supported the principles of religious liberty.

That the most cordial thanks of the Directors be presented to Dr. Lushington, to J. Williams, Esq. to W. Wilberforce, Esq. to T. Denman, Esq. and to Sir Joseph Yorke, for the splendid talent, the liberal feeling, and the convincing arguments with which they vindicated the character of their persecuted missionary, and supported the cause of Christian instruction among the negroes.

That the thanks of the Directors be most respectfully tendered to those Members of the Honourable the House of Commons, composing the numerous and distinguished minority, who so nobly asserted, by their votes, the claims of justice, humanity, and religion.

#### REPEAL OF THE TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS.

The following Petition from the three Denominations of Dissenters in the Metropolis and its environs, praying for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which was signed by more than 10,000 persons, was presented to both Houses of Parliament, on Thursday, June 17, 1824.

Lord Holland introduced it to the Upper House, by a speech, in which he prayed their Lordships to listen to the eloquent words and just principles it expressed, and he declared that it would be the pride of his life if he could in any way promote the object of the petitioners.

In the House of Commons, William Smith, Esq., the Member for Norwich, and Chairman of the board of Dissent-

ing Deputies, presented it, and after some explanatory remarks, he stated, that it was not his intention to ground any motion upon it, as he had been merely instructed to lay it on the table, in order that the case of the Dissenters might be brought before the view of the House; but perhaps the period was not very distant when the question might be brought forward in the shape of a motion.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Persons, being PROTESTANT DISSENTERS of the Three Denominations, Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist, in the Metropolis and its Vicinity,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners are the successors and, in many instances, the lineal descendants of those persons who, though dissenting from the Ecclesiastical Establishment of the country, were ever found among the most strenuous defenders of its constitutional liberties; who were universally zealous in assisting to establish the glorious Revolution under King William the Third, and active in opposing the criminal struggles which were subsequently made in favour of the deposed Monarch, and that your Petitioners, early trained in these principles, have ever steadily maintained them as the only solid and rational ground of union between the Sovereign and the subject, in the reciprocal bonds of generous confidence and affectionate duty.

That your Petitioners have always been accustomed to regard the exercise of private judgment, in religious affairs, as a right, natural, absolute, and inalienable; supremely important as affecting the highest interests, and involving the most sacred duties of man; and necessarily including the liberty, not merely of worshipping in the mode his conscience approves, but, also, of publicly declaring and defending the opinions he entertains; without which, indeed, scarcely could any religious freedom be said to be granted; for as freedom of thought cannot be restrained by human power, its most unlimited exercise cannot be the subject of human concession.

That your Petitioners bow down in the sincerest thankfulness to Divine Providence, for having so accelerated the progress of light and knowledge in the world, that these truths, which but a few generations ago could not have been asserted but at the risk of personal liberty and even of life, are now almost univer-

sally and completely recognised in all Protestant and in many Catholic States.

That your Petitioners are farther desirous of acknowledging, with grateful satisfaction, the large improvement of their legal situation in this country, during the life of his late Majesty, in which period more was effected than under any preceding Reign to emancipate Religion from the civil thralldom to which it was formerly subjected.

That, nevertheless, this freedom cannot be complete, as far as respects your Petitioners, while they remain proscribed and degraded on account of their non-conformity to the National Church.

That while such non-conformity was held legally criminal, (however unjustly,) it might, consistently at least, have been visited with punishment. But since the religious rights of your Petitioners have been acknowledged, and their profession and worship legalized, the continuance of punishment on these accounts, in whatever shape or under whatever pretext, is not only unjust in itself, but inconsistent with the principles on which every relaxation in their favour has been granted.

That your Petitioners are not ignorant of the pleas on which their request has been resisted; but they flatter themselves that the justice and liberality of the present times will no longer urge against them, that to be debarred from the common advantages enjoyed by other innocent citizens is not Punishment; especially when such degradation is, indeed, well known to the law, but only as the appropriate penalty upon heinous and disgraceful crimes. They trust that eligibility to office will no longer be refused to them when asked as a common right, from the palpable error of confounding it with the actual possession of office; which latter no Dissenter was ever so absurd as to expect, otherwise than in the same course with their fellow-subjects; but in their claim to be held equally eligible, they are corroborated by the well-known declaration of King William the Third, that "he wished a door should be opened, for the admission, into his service, of all Protestants who were able and willing to serve him;" and when it is obvious that the principle of the arbitrary exclusion of some from all offices of power, trust, and emolument, for the imagined security of others, may be used to justify every species of restriction and degree of severity, extending to the deprivation of property, liberty, and even life itself; if (as has often been the case) a prejudiced, misjudging, or fanatic majority should choose to deem such extremities necessary for their own satisfaction, or the safety of their religion;—and your Petitioners conceive the infliction of any of these evils, in their higher or lower degrees, on account of religious

persuasion or profession, to be, according to the most accurate and acknowledged definition, *Persecution* for conscience sake.

That with respect to the relief afforded them by the annual Indemnity Act, so often held forth as amounting to a virtual repeal of the disqualifying statutes, your Petitioners decline entering into discussions of its extent or efficacy; nor will they inquire whether it be not more wise (as it certainly would be more magnanimous) at once to repeal laws whose operation is asserted to be thus kept in continual abeyance: it is enough for them to observe, that a partial and discretionary indemnity against penalties still left to be incurred, is neither constitutional security nor equal justice. They well know, that though these Acts may incidentally afford protection to them as well as to those in whose favour they were meant to operate, (though not to the extent which has been imagined,) yet that for their ease or relief they were never intended; and the injury which your Petitioners most deeply and generally feel is of a different nature:—their universal exclusion from all the Offices of Society conferring honour, trust, and emolument, although they are called on to contribute their full share to all the burthens and expenses of the state, *even those levied for purposes purely Ecclesiastical*, is, doubtless, a particular injury to some few of their body who might otherwise, probably, be occasionally appointed to such situations:—but this is an evil light and trivial compared with the grievance of which they principally complain, viz. that by this exclusion, they are *all*, indiscriminately, held up to public odium, as unworthy to be admitted to such participation; and they ask from what portion of this dishonour can the Indemnity Acts relieve them? or how restore them to that their just station, from which, for no crime either proved or even imputed, they have been so harshly thrust away?

That your Petitioners humbly conceive, that even allowing the abstract right of employing all means for the defence of an established religion, it would still remain doubtful whether such restrictive laws confer any real security; and far more so, such a degree of it as to render expedient the use of weapons so questionable; but that, on the contrary, justice and liberality are the natural sources of strength and safety, while danger is the far more common result of suspicious policy and oppressive conduct. In this opinion, also, your Petitioners are again supported by the same royal authority before quoted, as recorded in your Journals, viz. "that granting ease to Dissenters would contribute very much to the establishment of the Church."

They farther presume to represent, that the specific test imposed is liable to the imputation of profaning a solemn rite of Christian Worship, to the great disgust of many religious Members of the Established Church, and to the scandal of religion itself: and that it is farther objectionable, because it can only deter the conscientious, while it is wholly powerless against unprincipled ambition. But that on such arguments, as affecting themselves, your Petitioners are little disposed to insist, because, by any other impediment equally efficient, they would still deem themselves equally aggrieved; and that, for the impropriety of the test, those who ordain it, and not those who suffer under it, are responsible.

On the whole, your Petitioners humbly pray this Honourable House to take the premises into their serious consideration, and to grant them relief: and they persuade themselves, that the improvements of their situation already conceded, so far from affording any just reason for expecting them to continue passive under the remnants of the galling yoke, may rather be regarded as an encouragement from the Legislature, respectfully, but frankly, to submit to its wisdom the expediency of abolishing every fragment of that system of restraint on religious profession, which had its origin in times of darkness and intolerance, and by which your Petitioners are to this day severely, and, as they presume to think, injuriously affected.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

Petitions on the same question have been recently presented to the House of Commons from Wareham, Sheffield, and Chichester—and we doubt not that next Session there will be a very general application on this long neglected but important question.

*Newport Pagnell Ecangelical Institution*, for the education of young men for the Christian Ministry.—The Annual Meeting of the Friends and Supporters of this Institution will be held at the King's Head, in the Poultry, on Friday Evening, the 9th of July.—The Chair will be taken at six o'clock.

*Society for the Relief of the necessitous Widows and Children of Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations*.—This charity was instituted in the year 1733, for the relief of the families of such ministers of the three Denominations, as at the time of their death, stood approved by the body of ministers of their own denomination, and who died so poor as not to leave their widows and children a sufficient subsistence. The Managers meet on the first Tuesday in every month, from October to May, to receive, examine, and relieve such cases



as shall be presented to them from the widows of either of the three Denominations. The number of recipients at present on the books, is two hundred and twelve, and to discharge the exhibitions for the present year would require the sum of £2750. whereas the annual income upon which the Managers can with certainty calculate, does not exceed the sum of £2000. or thereabouts, leaving a deficiency of £750. The Managers suggest the importance of promoting Congregational Collections and Annual Subscriptions, in aid of this fund.

*The decision of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the case of Principal M<sup>r</sup> Farlane.*—Our readers who have been interested in the spirited controversy, which has been recently maintained amongst the members of the Kirk of Scotland, on the general question of Pluralities, as connected with the case of Dr. M<sup>r</sup> Farlane, to which we have more than once called their attention,\* will learn, with regret, that the appeal of the Principal against the sentences of the Presbytery of Glasgow, and of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, was heard in the General Assembly, on Tuesday, the 25th of May last, after which, a protracted debate took place, and the former decisions were reversed by a majority of 85—the numbers being 165 for the Plurality, and only 80 against it. Thus it is the venerable elders of the Kirk justify the high-sounding eulogiums which have been recently pronounced on their wisdom and spirituality, and who labour most effectively to preserve the people

\* See Congregational Magazine, vol. VI. pages 596 and 670—and May Magazine, page 251.

from the influence of that much dreaded sect—the Independents!

*Ordinations.*—The Rev. Alexander Steward, late of Hoxton Academy, was recently ordained over the congregational assembly in Wood Street, Barnet, on which occasion, the Rev. — Humphries, of Mill Hill, commenced with prayer, and Dr. Harris, of Hoxton, asked the usual questions. The Rev. J. Lewis, of Islington, delivered the charge; the Rev. H. F. Burder offered up the ordination prayer; the Rev. J. Hooper addressed the people; and Mr. Morrison, the late minister, concluded by prayer.

On the 24th May, 1824, the foundation stone of a new Chapel, about to be erected for the accommodation of the increasing accommodation assembling in Wood Street, Barnet, was laid, on which occasion an appropriate address was delivered by Rev. A. Steward, the Minister.

On Thursday, May 27th, the Rev. R. Ashton, late Student of Hoxton Academy, was ordained to the pastoral office over the Independent Church, at Dedham, Essex. The Rev. W. Kemp, of Terling, commenced with reading the Scriptures and prayer; the Rev. A. Wells, of Coggeshall, delivered the introductory discourse, and asked the usual questions; the Rev. J. H. Cox, of Hadleigh, offered the ordination prayer; the Rev. Dr. Harris, Theological Tutor of Hoxton Academy, delivered the charge from 2 Timothy ii. 1.; the Rev. J. Blackburn, of Claremont Chapel, preached to the people from Deut. i. 38.; and the Rev. J. Goodridge of Langham, concluded with prayer. In the evening, the Rev. P. Sibree, of Weathersfield, preached from Rom. viii. 9.

#### STATISTICAL ACCOUNT OF DISSENTING CONGREGATIONS.

NOTICE.—It is a subject of unfeigned regret to the Editors, that so long a delay should have occurred in this department of their Work. It has arisen principally from the tardiness of Country correspondents. A considerable portion of matter has long been on hand, which would have furnished a regular supply, had it not been resolved, at the commencement of the Magazine, to proceed with the Counties in an alphabetical order. The difficulties attending this method have, however, proved insurmountable; and it is now resolved to proceed with any County, the materials for which shall be first supplied. The Editors beg leave also to state, that the Gentleman who has so long and ably conducted this department of their Work, having found it necessary to relinquish his engagement, they have prevailed upon the Rev. Charles Nice Davies, of Buntingford, Hertfordshire, a gentleman eminently qualified by his extensive acquaintance with the history of non-conformity, to superintend this department of the Congregational Magazine. The Ministers in the several Counties of England, are therefore respectfully invited either to communicate directly with Mr. Davies, or to nominate one or two individuals for each County to prepare their several statements, or to be a depository for the whole of their communications. The Editors now pledge themselves to proceed without delay, and to take the Counties in that order in which they may come to hand. They therefore invite their friends, and particularly the ministers throughout England, to lose no time in forwarding all the historical documents connected with their congregations. They wish it also to be understood, that all denominations of Dissenters will be noticed in this department of their Work, with the exception of Quakers and Wesleyans, and that authenticated information will be acceptable from every quarter.—Coach-parcels to be addressed to the Editor, at the Publishers'; and all post letters (paid) to the Rev. C. N. Davies, Buntingford, Herts.

## WORKS PREPARING FOR THE PRESS.

A Second Edition of the Village Hymn Book. By Ingram Cobbin, A. M.

A Volume of Sermons. By the late Rev. J. R. Vernon, Assistant Preacher at St. Paul's.

Free Communion Vindicated, being a Reply to the Rev. Joseph Ivimey on that Subject.

Proposals for publishing by Subscription, a Scriptural View and Practical Improvement of the Divine Mystery, concerning the Jews' Blindness and Rejection—the Coming in of the Fulness of the Gentiles, &c. &c. &c. In 16 Discourses from Romans xi. 25, 26, 27. By Archibald Mason. The work will be printed on a fine demy paper, from a neat small type, and comprised in about 300 pages. 8vo. Price 5s. 6d. Subscriptions received by Maurice Ogle, 9, Wilson Street.

In the Press, and will be published early in July, in One Vol. 8vo. *Bibliotheca Biblica*, a Select List of Books on Sacred Literature; with notices Biographical, Critical, and Bibliographical, intended as a Guide to the Consultation of the most useful Writers on Biblical Subjects. By William Orme, Author of the "Life of John Owen, D. D." This Publication will contain some account of nearly one thousand books, including editions of the original Scriptures, Concordances to the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and English Bibles; Hebrew and Greek Lexicons; British and Foreign Commentators on the Scriptures; Books on Sacred Chronology, Geography, and Antiquities; Ecclesiastical Historians; and numerous works of a miscellaneous nature, adapted to the illustration of the word of God: it will also furnish short notices of the age, country, and profession of the authors.

Mr. J. P. Wood has nearly ready for publication, in One Vol. 12mo. a Life

of Law of Lauriston, Projector of the Mississippi Scheme: containing a detailed Account of the Nature, Rise, and Progress, of this extraordinary Joint Stock Company, with many curious Anecdotes of the Rage for speculating in its Funds, and the disastrous Consequences of its Failure.

The Prize Essay on the Spirit and Tendency of Bible Societies. By G. de Felice. 1824. Translated from the French by William Youngman.

## WORKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

Vol. II. of the New Edition of Dr. John Owen's Works. 12s. boards.

A Sermon after the Interment of the Rev. John Sykes, of Guestwick, Norfolk; to which is added, a brief History of the Church and its Ministers. By John Alexander.

A Catechism on the Nature of a Christian Church. By R. M. Miller. Third Edition. 6d.

The Consolations of Religion Vindicated from the Charge of Enthusiasm: a Discourse occasioned by the Death of Mrs. Morell, of Wymondley. By Robert Halley.

Tales from Afar. By a Clergyman.

Letters in Rhyme, from a Mother at Home to her Children at School.

Part II. of Sermons and Plans of Sermons. By the late Rev. Joseph Benson. 6s. boards.

The Slave, a Poem.

For Christian Missions to the Heathen, an Oration. By the Rev. Edward Irving, A. M. 2s. 6d. sewed. Delivered before the London Missionary Society at their Anniversary, 1824. The whole proceeds of the Sale of this Discourse, without any deduction, are for the Widow of the Rev. J. Smith, Missionary, who died in the prison at Demerara while under sentence of death.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS, &amp;c.

COMMUNICATIONS have been received this month from the Rev. J. Thornton—C. N. Davies—H. W. Gardiner—R. Ashton—D. R. Thomason—J. Blackburn—T. Ashwell.

Also from Messrs. Elias Fuller—G. Hadfield—A Congregational Dissenter—Primitive—H. K. Smithers—Eaglet—Millar—W. B. Kilpin.

The Essay on Paley's Theory of Morals will appear in our next.

## ERRATA IN THE JUNE NUMBER.

Page 302, column 2, line 17, for misrepresentations read *misrepresentation*. Same page and column, line 22, the comma at "Scotch Covenanters" should have been a period, and before the word which, immediately following, insert the words, I shall select the few observations.

## IN THE PRESENT NUMBER.

P. 357. col. 2. line 26, for was read were.

359. — 1. — 17, for perfections read *productions*.

369. — 1. — 3, for objection read *objections*.

371. — 1. — 12 from bottom, for their read *these*.

374. — 1. — 5 from bottom, dele the word of before Dr. Lee.

374. — 31. — 13 from bottom, for man read *men*.